

NO. 2

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NEW WAVE IN TORONTO

NEVER TOO LATE ISSUE:

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VILETONES

PINK ROCK

JAM

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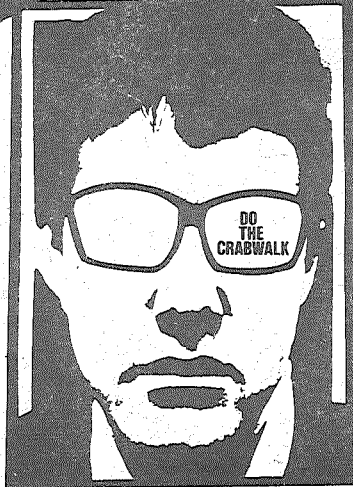


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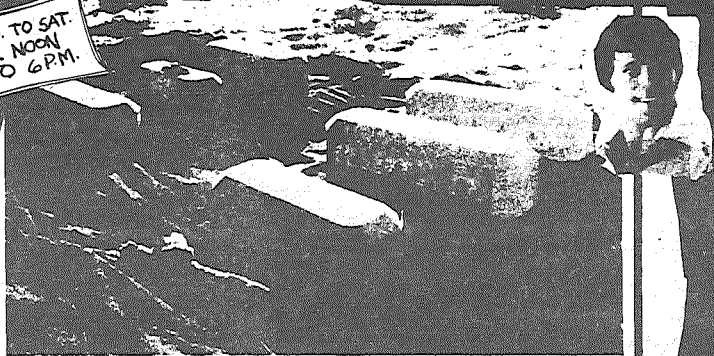
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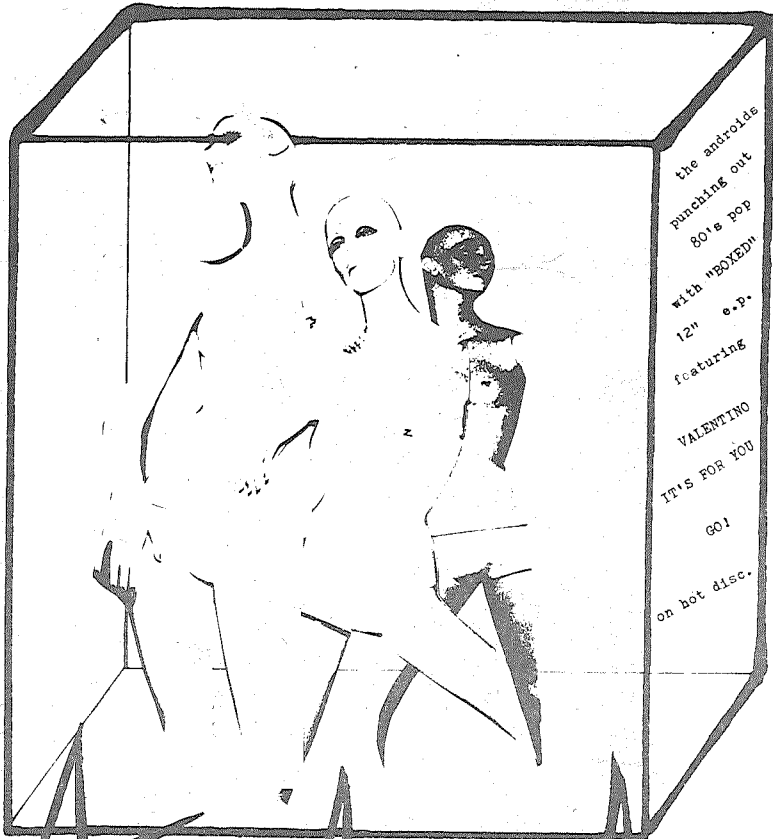
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shades

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COVER SHOTS BY PETER L. NOBLE

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SHADES MARK OF
EXCELLENCE



So I'm late. So sue me. I'm really glad that everybody dug SHADES #1 and you've all been calling your favourite smoke shops (forget Lichtman's, they're boycotted) to see what happened to #2. But it's no easy task for myself and the small staff of Shady comers and goers to bear the burden of being responsible to produce the only relevant rock & pop culture rag in Canada. Actually, it's not all that hard except for thinking up scams to pay for this and the last one simultaneously. Tell it to the Ontario Arts Council. Anyway, I've got my own band again and writing about rock is just a drag compared to really doing it, so you'll find the bulk of the print substance in this issue (quite a lot, huh?) has been handled by Sheila.

We couldn't quite keep up with all the activity worth writing about since #1. Lou Reed for instance, though we love him, could not get in for various reasons like a loose quota on out of town artist features and his own unavailability. And when you're not on salary (\$, or lack of, are an obsession these days. Sorry.) it's hard to get around town chasing local fave raves. We would like to cover everybody and will eventually.

The great response to #1 from the avant public at large prompted great dreams & schemes to follow up with a definitive dissection of rock trend in #2 which we were going to sub-title 'Post-Punk Déconstruction'. I've since had second thoughts about declaring the imminent death of a form and aphorism to convey the form which the Biz and media cohorts have been trying to declare dead since its inception. I'm not so desperate to jump trends that I would devalue a movement with roots in an oppositional tradition of great rock that reaches back to embrace such stalwarts as the Velvet Underground, Pretty Things, Fugs, Ugly Ducklings, and you know the ones I'm leaving out. I don't see why Punk can't continue to stand as a byword for that opposition. The danger lies in the possibility (arguably already upon us) that Punk would be misconstrued, misdirected, and forced into the situation of becoming strictly a lunatic fringe cartoon drawn by the media and the music's own champions' inherent cynicism. Of course, I'm not advocating any sort of nostalgic entrenchment. I can't recommend "the right road", either. There's just too heavy a torrent of ideas spewing out right now for anybody to pinpoint what the new wave's legacy will be, except for the inevitable damping of whatever oedipal fire spurred the insurrection in the first place.

Shades will continue always to be first and essentially a rock paper but we thought everybody'd be intrigued if we stuck Craig Russell on the cover. It's an indicator that we're gonna get increasingly into further-ranging stuff. Wouldn't it be great if the Punk bombshell that struck the music industry also landed on film and T.V. too! Television intrigues us especially. Where else is the unsuspecting face of the dominant culture bared so mercilessly? What other arm of popular media is such a sitting duck for subversive-bizarro tampering? One of these days, in fact, we'd like to do a Shades T.V. commercial. Say, right after the National News on C.B.L.T. where Babayan's carpet cleaners or Speedy Muffler King usually try and grab us. But keep your eyes open at any rate for television numbers in upcoming Shades.

Uh, I really don't know what else I can say and anyhow I've gotta get to work on my Viletones feature. All the other stuff is at the typesetter. Uhm, enjoy the issue, we've put a lotta work into it and, uh, keep your heads up cause #3 is gonna be a real fast follow-up (say a month) to make up for the long delays with the first two. Maybe now I can hit the Arts Council for some real money.

George Dean Higton

MYTH TAKES

Myhtakes is our update/
gossip column. Sometimes we make it
up.

Greg Shaw, of Bomp magazine & records fame has been jetting into town pretty regularly & seems to have a few entrepreneurial power plays up his sleeve aimed at world markets utilizing Toronto new wave talent. Smart move on his part as international wheeler-dealers in the Biz expect T.O. to explode this summer. Already thru the studio mill with Greg have been the B*Girls; G-Rays and others are waiting their turn. New label? About time. But why haven't any wizard Canadian backers got something happening yet?

* Poles set to release John Cale produced/Wartoke backed E.P. (Buddy; Cannibal kids; b/w Panic; Gonna Make You My Slave) & will follow with American east coast tour. How can they miss? U.S. critics will eat it up.

• Diodes knocked die-hard fans dead at Colonial gig in May. Crash N' Burn re-opening in Miama Beach as surf-side eatery specializing in lobster. Paul Diode

CENSORED

Viletones off to England this summer to tour with release of new single ("Swastika Girls" b/w "Danger Boy"). Smart move. "Possibilities" broke on Top of Pops last winter but there was no follow thru tour. Result: wasted potential.

Ex-Toyz lead singer Baby Oil & ex-Android Ruby T are putting together a new band: The Spikes. Other newcomers to watch for: The Vegetables, now *rehearsing in the west end somewhere*; Ex-Toyz lead guitarist Barrie Farrell's Existens, featuring underground fanzine editor Vincent Van Go-Go; Ex-Cardboard Brains' bassist Paul Desmond (the real cute one who used to fall down a lot) putting new power-pop ensemble together, the Sidewalk Sounds.

After months of preparation on new album, Beb Segarini & A&M split amicably. Bob expects to sell the album slsewhere for summer release.

Ugly's dream-gig at the Horseshoe with Richard Hell a winner!

Bill & Barb Shock considering a few spots around town to feature new wave sounds a la Shock theater. Way to go! Say, when is David's gonna re-open anyway?

Shades recommends the best greasy spoon dining spots every bi (or tri) month in this column. Best meals under \$3.00 had lately were at Tiger's Coconut Grove in the market Kensington (try Jackfish or chicken & rice. Best falafel in town, too); Palmer's lunch counter next door to the Park Plaza, Bloor & Avenue Rd. for Coq au Vin or prime rib roast. How about steak & eggs with chips, toast & coffee for \$2.40 at Vesta Lunch (Open all nite!)

Elvis Costello called the other day to say he caught M. Trudeau's Gestapo Girls at C.B.G.B.'s & he was knocked out. Maggie decided the quickest way to fame (if not fortune) would be thru the punk rock venue, as many others have before her. Can't wait!

Shades got a call from L.A. too, from Neil Young & all I can say is keep your eyes & ears open around town this summer!



F. POMPEII

By Rosy Ruin

SLICE OF LIFE



PHOTOS: P.L. NOBLE

A weekend with the editors

SPANNING GAPS

This particular slice of two slightly shady lives happened to start just before St. Patrick's Day. It ended, as documentation, five days later. It wasn't the most interesting space of time that shei and GD have spent together. It wasn't the most fun, either, but it was instructive. It looked like a lot of ideas started to come together as epiphenomena, if one — or both of them — happened to be watching it that way.

As shei was saying, it started on Thursday night with a set at the Beverley. That's the relatively cheap and slightly seedy bar near OCA, of course, which is the longest standing new wave showcase still in operation here. It's where you still see people most clearly in transitional stages. A lot of the crowd comes to it pretty much straight out of the strictly groanology culture. And they often leave with a new energy. The next time you see them, they're likely at least to have found some new buttons or pins to put on their overalls. Here, too, shei at first confirmed her impression that the movement was getting the males together faster. At least, that's how it looks. Fewer of the women seem to comprehend how to assemble the new style expressively — but then, maybe they have more extreme problems with it than getting a haircut resolves.

Anyway, it's at the Bev that Toronto has been able to watch the Dishes and take Drastic Measures, to mention only one audible tip of the local hotbed. That night, shei and GD had come to catch a whole set by a band that had intrigued them with a couple of numbers sometime before at the Isabella (which is the new wave bar in town that really merits extended coverage).

Johnny and the G Rays are a singularly unpretentious band that plays straight ahead into what GD claims is a kind of breakthrough for the new wave in Toronto. They almost seem to take solo breaks sometimes, and shei is sorry that the Bev does not have space to dance in. That's how shei still evaluates a song, in the great tradition set by her — and TV's — younger days, when there was more Bandstand than In Concert.

Later, somebody says that he agrees the G Rays are a(n unspecified) breakthrough. It leads to a discussion about other musical movements. Later still, someone else says the band has only one idea, though he wouldn't care to say just what it is. Who knows? Time will tell, if anyone is listening.

Friday doesn't bear going into: It was not without crisis. Or, shei supposes, some sorts of resolutions. But if shei doesn't care all that much anymore about whether to be or not to be a PhD after all, why should anyone else in this instance? At least it drove them to score some dope at last, at any price.

And so came Saturday. It started as usual, with a long coffee break, the newspaper, shei and GD going back to bed, probably. Maybe they even ate something, or shopped for essential ingredients in Kensington, across the street.

But the evening had become a fully programmed one in the course of a few days invitations, so they eventually got on with it. First, shei had promised to appear at a party that a friend of hers was giving in honour of a filmmaker visiting from England. The guest was a woman shei'd always wanted to meet, since shei'd heard her name so often in conversations with this particular group of acquaintances. What was more, the hostess (who taught at U of T), had written one of the most interesting things shei'd seen yet on female punk performers and especially The Curse.

So shei took GD and a copy of *Shades* and they proceeded with a foray into yet another reach of potential interest groups. Shei may have surprised a few of her old friends with her latest set of manifestations. Some of them hadn't even heard about the first novel shei'd written between the last time shei had seen most of the gathering, and her current editorship by association. But pretty much as soon as shei and GD had had enough wine, and caught a few people up in what they were doing these days, they left again for the Poles Hop. It was likely to be a change of pace from more or less intellectual chatting. It was.

The Hop was a star specked event for those even remotely in the know vis a vis current, local scene-making. The Ugly were there and it's always worth seeing one of the paradoxically prettier set of faces around town. Sally Cato ex-Concorde was there, and told GD what the rest of the (new) Androids are planning. Ruby ex-Android was there. The (till then) imputed Existens met each other for the first time and had a picture taken. And Nash the Slash and The Viletones were more than merely present and accounted for.

All of this was taking place at The Poles rehearsal space, which happens to be the old East End Boxing Club. Of course, they practice — and perform — in the ring. With the ropes up. This was a kind of going-away party, since they were on their way to New York in a few days, to record with John Cale producing. The night had the makings of a moment well hung over the precipice of something big being born on that score for a local band. Yet it delivered even more than that; something that may have been as important.

The Poles sets were predictably arousing. They seemed to ask for (and earn) the affection and support of their home town crowd as a send-off on their next venture. Michaela Jordana can occasionally make you think she treats her stage like a nest as much as an arena that boundaries her lean and sometimes predatory prowling. It's the kind of contradiction that makes her something more than magnetic. In context, her claim that "it hurts to leave" made as much sense as the clear implication that "anybody who says we're dishonest can get fucked." She also hoped there were lots of writers around the place that night; and the whole event did take on the air of something staged, hit or myth, for the media.

But only *Shades* was there so you'll have to take our word on everything. Because what happened next was the stuff out of which legends might well be born.

For, that very night, The Poles met The Tones in the ring, in Toronto's first ever summit jam of the bands. It started when Nash the Slash was added to The Poles lineup. Then Freddy Pompeii came on, and everybody tuned and revved up again while someone, somehow, got The Dog to his feet and into the ring with them. After a few false starts everyone started to see and hear the possibilities.

Meanwhile, Michaela Jordana had discreetly retired. She was more or less forced back into action by the arrival of some plain clothes who informed her that the place would be busted if everyone wasn't out in half an hour. Since there wasn't any other way to do it, she had to get back into the ring herself to relay the message from HQ. The Dog, of course, was more than glad to have her there, or try to.

As best she could manage it (given the attentions unmetaphorically handed upon her during an improvised duet) Michaela thanked the performers and their audience for coming to the party and invited them to leave immediately. Quite a few had already done so, in fact. There's nothing like a little law and order for breaking up a friendly comradeship that, in effect, seemed like the ruling mood that night. And, since she made it clear that this was "her space", Michaela herself was taking on the responsibility of keeping it so, long before any outside intervention began asserting its heavyweight status.

Shei and GD thought it was a significant occasion on several counts. It precluded what could become a tidal wave elsewhere for The Poles, but also for the Toronto sound as a whole. And that it might yet become a "whole" of sorts was attested in the fact of the jam itself. Representatives of three bands played on a song from a fourth (Teenage Head). Naturally, it raised a lot of questions about just where it all goes from here. But you start conceiving possibilities — and pitfalls — only when such questions do take the shape of real, vital, potent(ial) issues.

The next day, more or less by accident, some of these issues were raised again in another form by two media events your editors happened to watch in a sequence that began to make some strange, logical set of interconnections. The first was a TV special that was mostly the work of Monty Python's Eric Idle. It was called "All You Need is Cash", and it sent up several thought(less) balloons at once. One was Beatles nostalgia, another was such TV documentation as the "All You Need Is Love" series. Almost incidentally, it brought together nearly brilliant parodies of the Beatles sound itself, and the movies they were made into as the "pre-fab four" whose "legend will last a lunchtime".

The Beatles, of course, were not called by their right names either singly or en masse. Here, they are The Rutles, though the name is, in context, not quite a sexual

reference. Nor are they or the phenomena associated with them exactly duplicates of the originals from whom they are so patently drawn. They are something like the inhabitants of a parallel universe, perhaps. The parody is in the best and highest tradition of that form, encompassing both homage and satire in its periscope of vision. It made shei and GD laugh a lot; it also made them think. Especially about what seems, in retrospect, the inevitable fates of those who lend themselves with guts and gusto to the apparatus that started, in the sixties, to set stars in the fickle firmament of "popular taste" and culture in this particular fashion.

The details of the special were rich. Classic lines and concepts followed one another with the kind of pace that Monty Python accustomed a TV audience to as nothing else did. But of all the significantly telling moments, shei would no doubt choose those that featured Mick (and the one with a surprisingly brilliant, expressively deadpan Bianca) Jagger. Asked what brought about the demise of the Rutles, Mick grunted that it was "Women. Ya know, women. Gettin' in the way". In a jumping Jack flash, the Beatles phenomenon came to seem like a merely inevitable extension of peculiarly English schoolboy pranks and camaradery, singularly tough in its cultural rootedness in one sense — and singularly vulnerable in another, to the demands and strain introduced by individual women and relationships with something other than anonymous flocks of over-excited adolescence.

Of course, there was more to it than that both in and out of this treatment of the legend; the onset of mystic demagoguery and legal/financial infights as well as diverging "artistic" goals (or lack of them). But oddly enough, perhaps the most blatant alteration of the facts in the legend's followup was that one of The Rutles was portrayed as having become a punk rocker with a gigantic safety pin through his head — and presumably without his wife playing his keyboards.

After passing much of the evening in such a classic style of at-home entertainment, there was just time to get to the Grateful Dead movie shei and GD were anxious to see. Especially since it had been so thoroughly trashed in that Sunday's Star, mostly, it seemed, for including too much footage of roadies coping with equipment. Shei thought that might mean it was really *anti-illusionist* insofar as it revealed the means of production of the consumable that reaches its audience as a concert. Shei wanted to know whether the devices whereby such a film is made were also, as they say, or said in some circles, "laid bare". And whether that enforced some kinds of Brechtian analysis, and so on, ad nauseum, as shei sometimes gets when shei starts mouthing off that way about movies as semiological systems and stuff, and some of it nonsense.

Of course, mostly they sat back with their joints and more or less enjoyed the trippy cartoon visuals and the famous, reasonably produced sound. It was only nostalgia again anyway, in the end. And they'd both been fans at some point and all, so they didn't really mind much.

Yet it didn't bring the intrepid two to say "Oh, wow" and be done with it. The divergent coincidence of seeing this pair of documents on the same evening continued to keep the questions they were beginning to formulate present in the span of their attention. For here was another seventies version of a sixties seat of mythic musical activity, and a distinctive set of cultural phenomena that were more than a particular sound. Liverpool was not, of course, San Francisco. Nor did it seem like a simple case of one thing predating another, as though all it took was a certain length of time in which to grow hair and sophistication or to translate something across oceans and continents.

Apple Corps, for one thing, was never like the Dead house. But perhaps, looking at it now, we might wonder just how radical a departure either was, really, from the terms of the dominant culture they were supposed to be so alternate to. An entrepreneur looks pretty much like he's doing his job in the end, even when he does look like Bill Graham. Or maybe Cadillacs and white tuxedos all resemble each other.

But perhaps if shei wanted to point to her flash of insight this time, watching this (apparent) artifact of the sixties counter-culture, shei would say that it looked less like the hyper-realization of schoolboy dreams (wet or dry, or even wry), or those of the bikers who figured so prominently in it. There was a kind of ersatz Kerouac-by-way-of-Kesey-going-down-the-road factor. But that, perhaps, was the significance of

featuring the roadies. In the pre-Lear jet Elton John phase, big time rock and roll looked like a truck driver's fantasy melded in the crucible of technological fascinations. The Dead came to seem more or less identical with its sound system. There was a great deal between the poles of accomplished, romantic balladry and pre-concert jamming on the sounds of electronic serendipity. But only in a movie of one of those huge concerts could one approach human figures made ridiculously small against the scale of that which reproduced what in fact they were doing.

The Dead may have been a species of populist utilitarian in their desire to bring the best possible sound to the largest number of people. That desire also and inevitably involved them in ever-expanding technological and promotional wheeling-dealing. But they always presented themselves as more than a group. The extended Dead "family" crucially included its technological staff, its muscle (maybe even its trucks), its women and children, some of whom were dancers, singers, managers. And its audience, as well as those who were making this film that documented it all. There were, of course, high definition individuals who couldn't help acting or looking like leaders (primarily Jerry Garcia), or that the camera kept our eye on.

If nothing else, the film reminded shei and GD of something that — at the least — ten years after, they had practically disremembered. Of all the hippy bands, The Dead were the ones most likely to be inarticulated as "laid back". But there was a lot of energy too, that had made a lot of people probably more bodily than mentally aware. The imagery looks like so much period data now. It's the shots of people, and especially women dancing, that looks like release from inhibitions, even like (self-absorbed) liberation.

Which leads her, of course, to make the kind of point shei rarely avoids. For women were included in this film, and in the movement it purports to represent, in a way that they had not been in what was so off-handedly detailed in the history of The Rutles. Women were even on stage in this Dead concert. But they were there as, one has to say it, adjuncts. (In fact, to be honest, both sexes tended to look like subsidiaries of their own corporate equipment). There were a couple of decorative, talented dancers off to one side. There was a female vocalist who provided harmonies — and took the occasional solo when Garcia gave the sign. Off stage, the camera kept reminding us of the tanned, athletic charms of several women it persistently returned to. The most interesting and inventive of these bewitched nymphs (some of whom, shei was sure, must have come California dreamin' from Flatbush or Arkana), were dancing with each other, or alone. They were beautiful, haunting, ordinary. They were dressed up and down and made up or under; they were poised in graceful flights of acutely self-aware body fancies; they were awesomely pathetic in their largely innocent separation from much that was outside their absorbed consciousness.

SLICE OF LIFE/2

Shei thought shei saw the seeds, the flower, and some of the rotter fruit of, among others, the feminist movement that had grown out of the sixties. Of course, shei knew all that for herself, and where it came from. Even where it seemed to have gone besides the discos. It didn't bother her much that a first response might have been to yet another accidentally, indirectly male version of recent female history, for example. Or that the film itself was about as classically naturalistic and romantic as the Dead themselves now seemed, and as long and sometimes laboured as their infamous tension and release principle concerts had been. Somehow, in spite (or maybe because) of risks, the show came off pretty successfully.

It did bother her that this was a film that seemed to evoke so provocatively where one movement "ended", and a generation of girls started from round about '68 or so at the latest. But it was made in 1974. In this displacement, if anywhere, was another revelation. Recently, shei'd come to suspect more than shei really wanted to know about The Backlash. Shei hadn't yet considered that there might also be romantic nostalgia here, too, for the days of the "women's movement" or the "sexual revolution" (whatever), when it still seemed possible in those terms, and when no one felt responsible, somehow, for what might happen next if breakthroughs in and between the sexes could in effect enact themselves as breakdowns that were neither pure nor simple.

It might have helped her explain a lot to herself about things that had, in fact, been troubling her (at least in theory). Like why shei preferred apparently misogynist punks to either the old-fashioned rock and roll kind, or self-appointed liberated types. Though for the most part shei, like several other people shei knew and liked, was rather too busy doing other things to dwell a great deal on or in a problematic formulated thus. Anyway, these days shei had GD and The Curse to talk to about some of it. So that all and none of the above might be taken as self-explanatory, multiple choice answers to questions that never tested much but everybody's patience and forbearance, maybe. Naturally, there were and are real issues involved. But if a lot of people failed, and still do, perhaps that only means it's time to talk about redeterminations of the testing "conflict".

Yet still other conflicts remained to round out this rather long weekend, however. These took shei and GD right back into the immediate locale (in which history might very well be in the making if they have anything to say about it). It seems ironic that the occasion this time was a concert by one of the newer set of English invaders.

They had been invited to hear The Jam at the Colonial, courtesy of Polydor. So of course they went. The evening started well, if inauspiciously. There was an extra chair at a table with Freddy Pompeii and Margarita Passion of New Rose. Shei appropriated it, and Dr. Bourque of The Curse graciously donated hers to GD's use. The arrangement was short lived, since Nazi Dog just as quickly reappropriated it, along with the drink ticket. But soon they were all fairly comfortably seated, given that all or some of them were likely to be absent here and there, in dressing rooms, at other tables, trying (in vain) to get the drinks that were all but impossible to procure.

It was another of those scenic events in the local underground, so everyone kept themselves occupied in the interim catching up on scuttlebutt, discussing each others' latest publicity, performance or plans, and so on. Mostly shei just sat and hoped for a drink, soon, while GD was kept busy being a shady media notoreity and talking about his new band.

Finally the opening act came on. It was a strange choice to play with the Jam, a local set of pros currently assembled as The Madcats. Now, there's nothing really offensive about this group unless you happen to be really exclusive in your attention to the new wave. But then, that's what most of this crowd did happen to be. It's not surprising, in fact. Any new movement tends to be a little evangelistic and to define itself in oppositions. New wave rockers by and large, with their emphasis on shock-treatment vanguardism, hardly make an exception to this rule. Even shei was suggesting that the Madcats should receive the special Shades Award for the-most-boring-band-heard-twice-in-a-month-for-free-drinks, and shei only withdrew the notion when shei decided shei hadn't had enough drinks this time for them to qualify. Still, shei wasn't prepared for what actually happened.

For the strained and maybe thoughtless booking was not brought off without some consequences. The crowd was there to hear the Jam, and part of it was pretty outspoken in their impatience with the Madcats. For all shei knew, they were old friends, or foes. Anyway, there was quite a lot of stuff lobbed onstage, mostly software like cigarette packs, serviettes, matchbooks, crumpled menus. It wasn't exactly friendly, of course; but it wasn't all that hostile either. It probably wasn't even all that personal. It would have happened to any reasonably good, bad or indifferent old time rock and roll band on the stand that night. But it turned into a virtual fiasco.

As audiences will, this one (or rather, its more fractious element) came to lobbing a bottle. Mind, as far as any of the rest of them saw, it was *lobbed*; that is, softly if provocatively tossed, not to hit or hurt anyone. In a lot of rock and roll circles, it's a sign of approval. But it wasn't so intended in this case, nor was it so received. In fact it was returned from whence it came, post haste. Only this time it was not lobbed. The bassist hurled it, hard, and pretty accurately, and cut someone badly in the general vicinity of his jugular. And then there was a little predictable mayhem.

Though his posture had been consistently one of aggressive defensiveness to this point, the bassist now tried to beat it. He was literally kicked back on by the bar's manager. On the way back, he was grabbed from below by an agitated woman who had been with the injured party now on his way to the hospital. There were some more affronted sounds and milling

fury but, while this part of the crowd stayed on its feet, there wasn't much more real action and the band finished its set. They probably liked not being liked in this context, who knows? Maybe it made them think they were the kind of pioneers who meet resistance. But to those who were sitting just above the fracas, it all looked downright irresponsible.

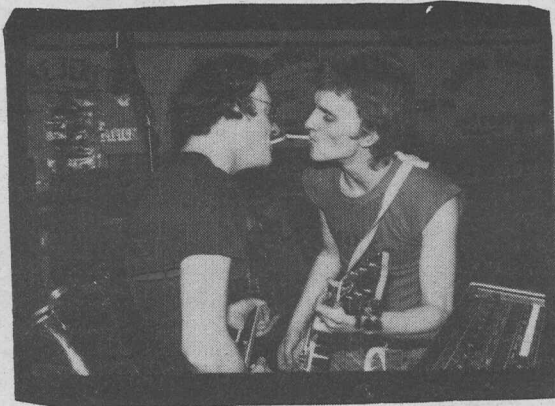
The Viletones assembled with your editors did not approve. Mainly, they seemed to think it was unprofessional to take heckling personally, and worse to throw things from the superior height of a stage. Shei and GD wondered what — besides the profit and publicity motives — led record companies to yoke such contradictions as the Madcats and the Jam, and try to shove the metonymy down the collective throat. Perhaps it didn't have to end with violence, and the segment of the crowd that initiated it was hardly to be applauded. But still, the whole arrangement resembled either a risk, or a set-up for the "punk rock" typifications. The only thing that really surprised her was that the next day the affair was not as sensationalized in the regular press as shei had expected it would be. The daily papers only said the Madcats had somehow scored a "victory" for good old fashioned rock and roll, and didn't mention that even at that they are mediocre at their best. Of course, it would have been hard to make much of the Jam as punks, either, but shei couldn't help comparing this sequel to another after shei'd seen the Vibrators, and then seen their marquee poster featured in a TV drama in which a nice not so young thing is raped after going to a concert she hadn't really wanted to attend with her boyfriend's best friend. (The whole thing nearly resulted in her committing murder.)

The issue at hand, however, remained to be heard. In some senses, the Jam are newer than new wave (and older too). Throwbacks to the influence of The Who, though they don't like hearing that. They're one of the first bands to be aggressively pegged with the post punk label of Power Pop. The latest issue of *Bomp* can tell you all about it, and what the Jam have (or don't have) to say for themselves is featured elsewhere in these pages. Let it suffice to say that they are clean cut boys with very nice suits and ties and black and white shoes who, whatever you may have heard, do not jump quite as high as Peter Townshend used to.



And, though shei's been reserved about a term that sounds like a media concoction, it does describe their sound and presence. It's powerful, driving, well played rock and roll in a mainstream, popular idiom that what others are calling the "planned obsolescence of punk" has prepared the return of. Now that the shock therapy is (supposedly) complete, and an audience enlisted from the ranks of those heretofore lobotomized by the blandest or the loudest repetitions of the industry's formulae for success, we are apparently ready for rock and roll to become again the popular music it started as. But if the Jam is one part revolt and dissatisfaction, it's another part (largely) innocuous opportunism, unsatiric nationalism, and so on. Shei enjoyed the set well enough, and GD liked it better. But shei'd still take The Clash and Big Youth and The Ramones if shei can't have the Sex Pistols these days.

But what had it all added up to in this long weekend? Why this particular slice of editorial life? By accident more than design, a number of events had coincided in such a way that significant connections were made in some synaptic sense. Yet perhaps it didn't finally make sense until shei and GD heard an outsider concur, without any coaching, with their idea that Toronto now is in media res of what might turn out to be the coming epic moment in cultural history.



It's not quite like Liverpool was. That town only really gave birth to a single, overwhelming legend anyway. It is more like San Francisco circa '65, where there were several bands with different sounds and approaches, and a whole melange of other kinds of activity that surrounded them and publicized them, and made its own myth/takes. Shei would add here, however, that if shei'd been asked then which was more important and influential, San Francisco or the Velvet Underground and the renegades in Detroit, shei would have been close to dead wrong. In the actual moments of pop-cult history one is more than likely to be both right and wrong, simultaneously, and out of synch with "reasons".

Furthermore, it wouldn't pay to lose sight of what is specific and particular about this point in time and space. In the last ten years the music and promotion industries have consolidated a different apparatus and relation with a mass audience still growing by unprecedented leaps and apparently without bounds. Those who want even a piece of this action are faced with possibilities — and problems — never before encountered by musicians and performers. It is laudably naive (maybe suicidal) to think anyone can simply go ahead without coop(era)ting. But it is not surprising that current new directions are shot full of problematic contradictions on this and several other important levels.

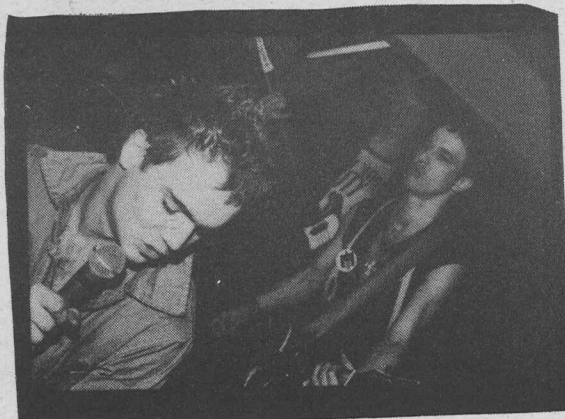
This overall socio-economic problematic is intensified here in Toronto. At the moment, we have some of the most desirable recording facilities anywhere in the world, and we're attracting the cream of the international crop to our studios and our clubs as well as our concert venues. All of this coexists with the traditional problem of making it in a country still largely dominated by its cultural ties and affiliations elsewhere, and with new, large

developments like TO's recent, phenomenal growth into cosmopolitan urbanity, and its structural situation in a country where it dominates control of money and the media, in a world shifting from an east-west to a north-south axis of air-route frontiers, communications technologies, and economic (im)balances of power. It is in some of these respects that it is perhaps more like New York in the late forties and fifties than anywhere else, so that the revival of interest in original rock and roll, and the resemblances between the local scene and antecedent, essentially bohemian avant-garde movements in the arts is not quite an accidental set of impressions.

Yet it's still patently true that Toronto artists have to move out at some point and make it, if at all, elsewhere. Nor is this simply to say that we all inhabit a multinational global village. There seems to be stronger, more viable local action here than there ever has been, and that has as much to do with the audience as the bands that are not getting to play for it often enough. Most of that is good for everyone. The local bands that have survived are growing strong on these roots, and retain a sense of regional status. Some of them are, concurrently, ready to take our songs and varied sound out into a market whose circumference is demonstrably beginning to be everywhere at this point. On the other hand, visitors like The Ramones are starting to talk of playing here as a special occasion now that Toronto the Good seems more likely to get up from its heretofore provincial seat and respond.



And so it seems we can hope that the beat will indeed go on and out into the world from here. Let the CN rival the Eiffel Tower, not to mention the World Trade Center. But there's more than killer bees out there, coming to get us here. It's still hard, and perhaps too soon, to see just how Toronto will produce that legend now in the making without reproducing many of the terms that wrought earlier demises, or those that are currently hegemonic. Perhaps, realistically, it's impossible to avoid the snakes when you start up the ladders of assorted high stakes. It may be, for example, that by the time a Shades Award is bigger than an inflated Juno, our favorite bands will be dropping by only occasionally, or still starving. Because it's (not) all an innocent, metaphoric game, after all.



THE
END!

PEOPLE'S POET LAUDS PUNK!

Damned sirs:

A dismember of your ~~xxx~~ uncooperative has unhanded a copy of SHADES, subheaded NEW WAVE IN TORONTO. In all worst wishes I sincerely hope not.

In my opinion punk is the last faint splash, heard with delight by unwelcoming ears, of an ear-rending type of music which has prevailed too long. Punk is not the end of the world. The world will be the end of punk.

Punk is a waste of time which is a waste of time which is a waste of time which is a waste of time etik.

The curious feature of you punki is you don't look like punki. You look like vampires. Punk is unpolitical, unpalatable, unalive and undead. It's a heedless impediment, indeed needless.

Punk is a junked skunk plunked in a sump, a tidal ~~was~~ from the Don Municipal Sewer. The attempt of punki to scowl is pitiful, their facial muscles are all punk. Punks fail to shock audiences since the audiences are shocking beyond punk belief.

Punk is what's needed by the fellah who has everything ... nothing.

These observations of punk come from a profound lack of knowledge with which I hope to be eternally blessed.

As my donation to the cause of punkdom I send you a valuable autograph.

Milton Acorn

Milton Acorn



P.L. NOBLE

"And if it's not beyond my own backyard then it was never there to begin with."

DRASTIC MEASURES TAKES YOU ON A MUSICAL TRIP TO THE LAND OF OZ

By P.L. Noble

There has always been imaginative, constructive music coming out of the Toronto scene. But a major problem with this dynamic music is that it caters to a small rock 'n' roll community. It's not as if everyone who's into it belongs to a certified breed of intellectuals and visual oddities. These people generally thrive on new ideas and multi-creative talent. The remainder of music consumers shy away from the so-called "scene", however, because they are uncertain about it. They just don't understand it. As a result they feel insecure and alienated. This is one way the scene becomes such a mysterious and unusual topic for various kinds of babble about it.

Times have got to change for the better, though. Everybody should get on the rock 'n' roll bandwagon, join forces, and create a healthy music industry in Toronto. I'm stressing Toronto because how many times have you listened to people saying "Canada"? Canada isn't Toronto, y'know. Toronto may be the mainstream for progressive music in Canada. But even if it is arguably the most artistic and musical city in the country this doesn't make it automatically superior. Sometimes being too progressive and modern can interfere with an original intention about positive — and popular — success. That's what has happened in Toronto. Everybody's so sure about themselves, so eager and so itchy to obtain results that they lose sight of larger, genuine interests. That's why there is a "scene".

Drastic Measures is a wonderful pop-rock band currently gigging around the scene. In the not so distant future this band should take the city by storm. Believe me, they are going to be the first progressive pop band to forge a link between the scene and the commercial industry here. Success will not come easily. Drastic Measures will have to prove themselves to the people who haven't yet conceived what pop music is all about. But steady progression ensures a lasting future. Drastic Measures has such a future.

Ignore all the hoopla about the so-called Power Pop movement in Britain. It's pure hokey pokey! We've had our own brand of power pop for a good six years now. The majority of listeners haven't taken it seriously because none of it has been on the AM charts. Still, bands like The Dishes and Drastic Measures are going to make it yet. They play fine pop music, they have strong followings, they aren't violent, they look good, and you can actually hear their lyrics!

Not long ago I spoke with Tony Malone, writer-lyricist-composer-singer-keyboard wiz for Drastic Measures. We talked about the music industry in Canada, commercialism, originality, and basic pop. Questions were answered ... answers were questioned. Mostly I felt important opinions and ideas were voiced; so important I want you to hear them too, without any interruptions.

Nuff said, read on ...

Shades: What is it about the Drastic Measures sound that makes it so fresh and original?

Tony: Maybe it's the all-knowing disguised as innocence. One record company disliked our sound because he thought it was "too safe". He felt there was nothing offensive about our sound. He actually had the nerve to compare us to the Runaways! What they don't realize is that that's what is making it. That's what you hear on the AM charts. It's music that anyone in the family can listen to. Our music has multiple meanings. I don't know if the rest of the stuff on the AM airwaves is really meaningful.

Hopefully Drastic Measures will make it onto the AM charts. I think our music is a lot heavier and thicker, as compared to what gets airplay now ... but I feel we've got commercial potential too. In a way I do feel our music is safe. I don't think there's anything in our songs that would offend anyone. For instance, one of our most popular songs seems to be "TNT". Basically the chorus goes, "Don't play with TNT, play with me". It's about young people blowing up the suburbs and taking over their parent's houses. But a word from the wise tells them to cool it.

I have a feeling this band is going to be very big. It's going to do nothing but progress. When it stops progressing then we'll find something else to do. I mean, if I spent a year and was still doing the same thing, I'd pack my bags and try something totally new. I guess I get bored after a year. I figure if something doesn't click then you're doing something wrong.

Let me tell you ... the record companies don't help either! They can't do anything for a talented band. It's not whether they want to or not; they can't. Nobody listens to the Canadian record labels 'cause they aren't considered important. Canadian acts aren't making a splash anywhere because they're very boring. The Canadian record companies are really straight and conservative. As a result nobody takes them seriously.

I want Drastic Measures to achieve commercial success so we can go on and create art and be able to afford it. People who create artistic records first starve for years and years, sell out, and then they make their money. The next thing you know, they go downhill. So I thought I'd sell out first; just write commercial stuff, make money, and then I could create whatever I would want to. Our band is trying to be commercial and tasteful at the same time.

I'd like to add a laser light show to our next performance at the Beverley Tavern. We'll be having a bunch of chorus girls, they didn't come through last time. It's really hard to get good help, y'know. Hopefully we'll have the whole affair catered just like a bar mitzvah. We'll show some stag films of our guitarist, Howard. He's already agreed to it as long as he can wear a paper bag over his head. That's as extravagant as we're getting at this point!

Everybody rambles on about good ol' New York City. I don't know if I like everything that's coming out of NY anymore than I like Toronto. Who knows? Maybe Drastic Measures will strike it rich in Kansas. Judy Garland found what she wanted there. I can still remember her saying, "And if it's not beyond my own backyard then it was never there to begin with".



Note: the editors invite you to read this between, under, behind the lines. Wherever, however might make you think some about it. Pete introduces some pretty important questions that are going around these days as if they were a new disease. We don't agree with him about the band he proposes as a cure. Why we don't was more apparent to us after we'd seen what its leader had to say for himself and how he tinkers with classics. Perhaps we'd call it creative misapprehension if we didn't know some stronger words that seem to fit as well. Like compromise, naively cynical, and opportunistic poseur. Maybe Pete is right after all. Take it easy, of course, but take it all either way.]

CARE ABOUT THE TUBES?

It is a well known fact that The Tubes are one of the most unique bands in the history of rock n' roll. When one pays \$8.95 to see The Tubes one does not expect to remain bored for the next few hours. When The Tubes played Toronto last month I decided that I was going to see the *whole* show, so at noon I started on my half hour walk to the Gardens. The first good sign was seeing the trucks starting to unload. Thinking quickly, I walked up to a roadie and asked him if he knew where the tour manager was. He said he didn't so I jotted his name down on a piece of paper and told him if he ever wanted to work again he'd better always know where the manager is and he better let me in on the double. So now I was in and I had to face a 90 year old guard. Luckily I had the newest issue of Playboy, so we made a deal. I walked in. He put his teeth in. I quickly found a seat in the golds, lit up a Winston, and got prepared for the show. Looking up to the stage all I saw was a bunch of crates saying "Human Blood, Handle With Care. Property Of The Tubes." MY GAWD what were they planning to do to us this time? For the next two hours I watched an empty stage become home for the Tubes. At about four o'clock the place was crawling with guys with three-piece suits and big, bouncy broads with Buffalo accents and big creepy guys with cigars. I knew I was in trouble. Some big guy came over to me and said "Who the fuck are you with?" Looking down at my "Rocket to Russia" shirt I quickly said "My names DEE DEE and I'm from the Ramones. Quay Lewd told me to come and check out the show, ya' goddamn cretin!" He apologized and walked away singing "I was a punk before you were a punk". I knew I was safe for a while longer, but realized that if I was going to see the show I was going to have to get one of those shiny stick on passes. About ten minutes later Carole Pope walked in and I ran over to her and pretended like I've known her all my life. I explained my plight and she laughed and said, "Take my advice, get out of town!" I followed her like a little puppy to the back stage area and saw a big box of those desirable back stage passes. There was a big guy guarding the box so I smiled and peered into the box out of curiosity. "Oh my gawd, no! I dropped my contact lens into the box. Help me look for it, man". The guy believed it! So while the two of us are fingering our way around the box I palmed a pass. As soon as I had one safely out of sight in my hand I pretended that I found the lens, put it in and gave the guy a smoke for helping me. I rushed into the washroom and proudly put the pass on my chest. "Access to ALL Areas." Now I could go anywhere without a hassle. I walked out to the stage area and low and behold there was FEE WAYBILL, the method frontman of the Tubes. Christ I'd been doing so well I thought I'd go all the way and ask for a quick interview. I told him all about SHADES and he said, "Sure man, let's go into my dressing room where it's quieter." I couldn't believe it! Now I only had one problem, what the hell do you say to Fee Waybill?

SHADES: What can we expect from the Tubes after the "What Do You Want From Live" album? (On A&M Records)

FEE: Well for the next album you can expect to wait about eight months.

THE TUBES

SHADES: Will the live album be a turning point in the band's history?

FEE: Possibly. Yes. Most probably yes, but I'm not going to tell you what.

SHADES: Tell us about the Tubes in England.

FEE: England was incredible! England was so great we almost decided never to play in the U.S.A. again, because they went completely berzerk in England. Totally nuts!

SHAES: I noticed that you made the front cover of every big trade paper in the U.K.

FEE: Yeah, I know, we just got amazing press. Everything we said they just totally twisted around and blew it out of proportion and put in on the front page. I loved it, it was great.

SHADES: What was the original concept for the Tubes?

FEE: It took so long to develop into what we're doing right now that it really never started as a concept. We just got together and started playing' and it developed over a number of years. We never had a specific concept in mind, it just came.

SHADES: So did all the characters just naturally come into being?

FEE: Yeah, we just didn't sit there and figure out all these characters and go and do 'em. They came one by one, very slowly, and they all keep coming.

SHADES: How do you manage, physically and mentally, to change from character to character, in a two hour show, seven nights a week?

FEE: It's very tiring. I get a lot of sleep. You just gotta keep in good shape and the only way to do it is not abuse yourself on the road. When ya got a five month tour in front of you, you just can't start out by going berzerk. You gotta pace yourself. Get a lot of rest, eat right and don't take drugs. I don't do any dope.

SHADES: Speaking of dope, do you think that a lot of the audience misses the message in "White Punks On Dope?"

FEE: Sure, a lot of the times the kids are out there thinking that we're telling them to take qualudes. That's what the problem is with our material, half of it's going right over their heads. It depends on the city and on the crowd. Like if you play an intellectual college-like crowd, they'll pick up a lot more. Whereas if you play somewhere like Chicago they're screaming "White Punks" the second we step on stage. They don't give a fuck! They don't know what the hell is going on. It's extremely frustrating for us. We go through extremely frustrating, depressing periods where we fell like we're just jacking off. People are not getting it, we're working our fuckin' butts off, they don't understand it, and there not buying our records.

SHADES: How have sales been?

FEE: Well this one has been the best. It's surpassed the sales of the other three so we're not as frustrated now.

SHADES: I noticed that the third studio album, "Now", didn't receive the same amount of promotion and press as the previous two.

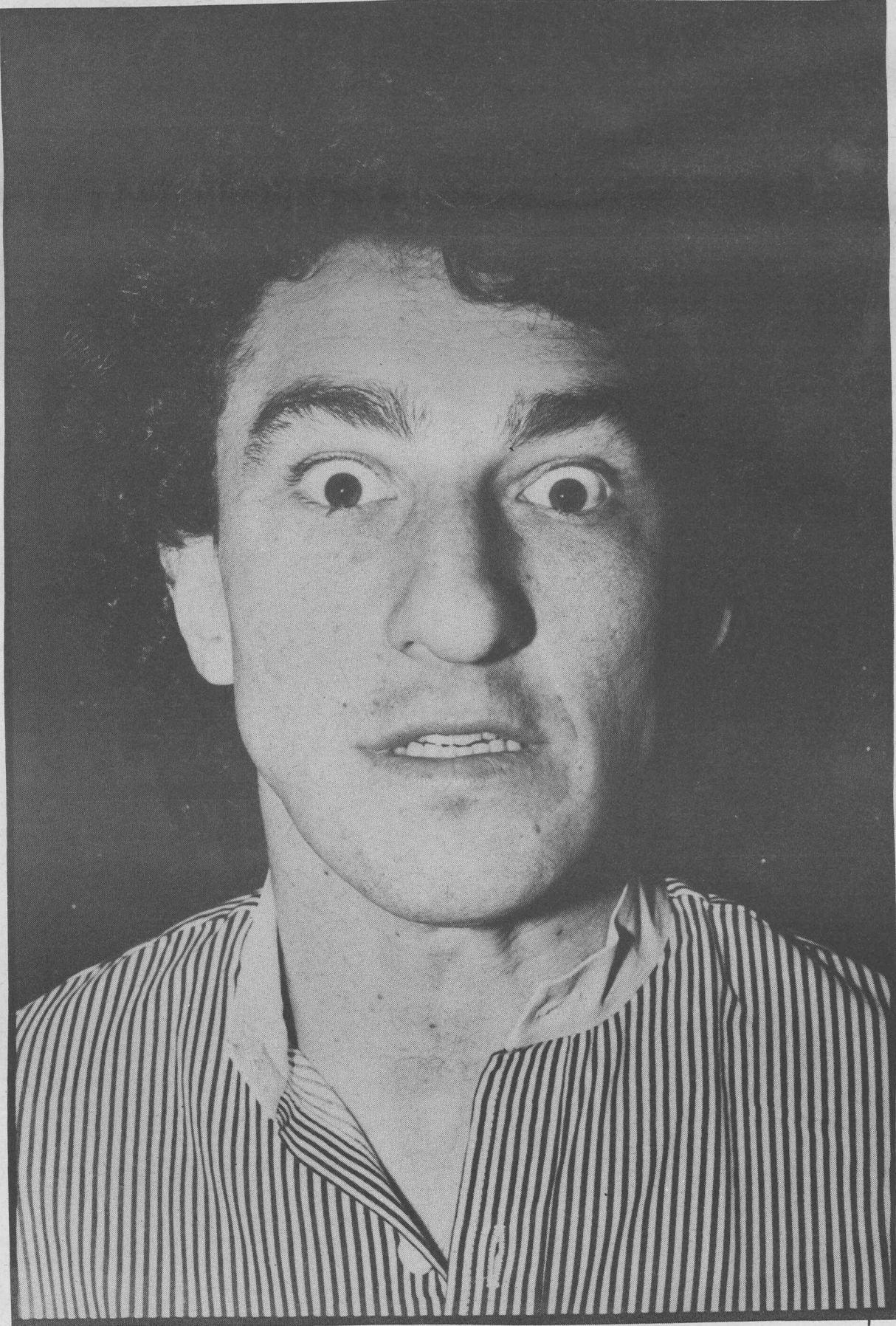
FEE: Yeah, "Now" was one of those frustrating, depressing times I just talked about. We decided that we would try and put out more serious music on the album and go by making it on your musical ability instead of the visual overload. Obviously, the people didn't want to hear that. They want to hear the bizzare rock numbers with parody, cynical wit. We try to do straight numbers and it's just a big flop.

SHADES: Do you think that someday you'll be able to come on stage as a "straight" rock n' roll act?

FEE: We gotta be able to do that because we can't continue to play this. It's too hard on us. We're not making money on it. We're really only doing this as an act of love. We're not getting rich, we're just doing this for the people and having a great time.

Well, back out to the golds, check out the incredible show, party a bit and go home to bed. Just another day in the life of a frustrated journalist. Bon soir.

P.L. NOBLE



MY VILETONES ARTICLE

by George Dean Higton



It was the Spring of 77 and I was busy at work in the west end trying to assemble the Shade Band. I wanted to offer T.O. a real alternative to the grunge that had been passing as its rock heritage for so many years. Of course there was Rough Trade getting real slick down on Yonge street and on the C.B.C. and all; and the Dishes were interesting if a trifle heavy on coy affectation. I'd caught the Ramones, Cale, Patti, and was hip to the stuff that was going on in England too. But I really didn't know if I wanted us to be *punk rock*, y'know? I mean, it had been done, right? I just wanted to be *original*. I wanted to remind people that at one time there used to be real rock bands in this town who people talked about, and gathered to see, and were proud of because they were making tough music right here. Right downtown! Yeah, and then those bands split to L.A. or something and got rich and never mentioned this place again.

Anyway, it's a long story but, basically, the guys I had in the Shade Band were heavy-metal good ole boys, real West End kids, who played great but thought Clapton and Hendrix were it. Period. And when I'd start to rave on with my self-appointed rock visionary number they'd tell me where to get off and ask me pointed questions about where we were gonna work and stuff. They thought maybe we should put together a tape for Music Shoppe. Shit! At least we coulda got a gig at the Beverley. But alas the Shade Band never got east of Bathurst, and never were heard by more than about thirty people. The guys went back to their jobs and scratchy records and I left the city soon after. The rest is history and another long story, I guess; but before I split I tried to find another spot in another alternative band. I played with the Poles for a couple of days but I wrote, and strict back-up guitar is a real boring job. I took to scanning the musician's classified in the Star and remember seeing Steve Leckie's add — something about Punk Rock Band Forming, blah, blah, blah, in bold type. I thought with a sneer, "Ha! That's the finish of punk rock." Then I left to spend the summer in New York City.

I got back in the fall having soaked up a lot of Manhattanized impressions of what constituted the real balls in rock n' roll, and a fair idea of what this rock writing trick was all about. So fair, in fact, that I managed to wrangle a few jobs doing it down there.

The Viletones by now were firmly established as leading lights in a well-consolidated local new wave (a term I picked up on in N.Y.) community. I'd missed their first shows when the Dog had slashed and burned himself but it was the kind of grandstanding, along with the swastika fetishizing, that I was willing to analyze and accept as a kind of spectatorial catharsis. And the first blush of unapologetic naivety had not evaporated from Toronto punks' expectations. There was solidarity in adversity as the press, for the most part, was still dismissing the punk bands out of hand or, when considering them in print at all, with that sort of counterfeit condescension that's such an easy substitute for putting critical/aesthetic (or political) values on the line.

From what I'd heard on vinyl I was prepared to like the Tones right away. They began with and have retained and sharpened a knack for composing some of the best tunes of any band anywhere, even within the 2 and 3 chord formal straightjacket they imposed upon themselves. And Nazi Dog's gutsy vocals, suitably all-choked-up in the emotional parts, and Freddy Pompeii's *crunch* guitar were standouts everytime. When I did see them perform I was as impressed by them as anyone I'd ever seen. The Dog's archetypal sexual thrust and parry and Fred's commanding, restless territorial prowling on stage were visual highlights, backed up by a bottom/rhythm provided by Chris and Motor that made the band as solid, when they wanted to be, as any on the face of the earth.

P.L. NOBLE

But, you see, you could never give them credit for consistency. When the Tones are hot they're scorching, but when they're off they are completely off and away. Of course, this unevenness, extreme as it can be from either end, might be the key to their greatness. They're almost an improvisational group to an extent when you consider the fact that they don't bother to rehearse anymore. When the Viletones meet on stage it's a fresh encounter everytime and a new shuffle. They're probably too broke to afford a practice space anymore, anyway. What would they do with it?

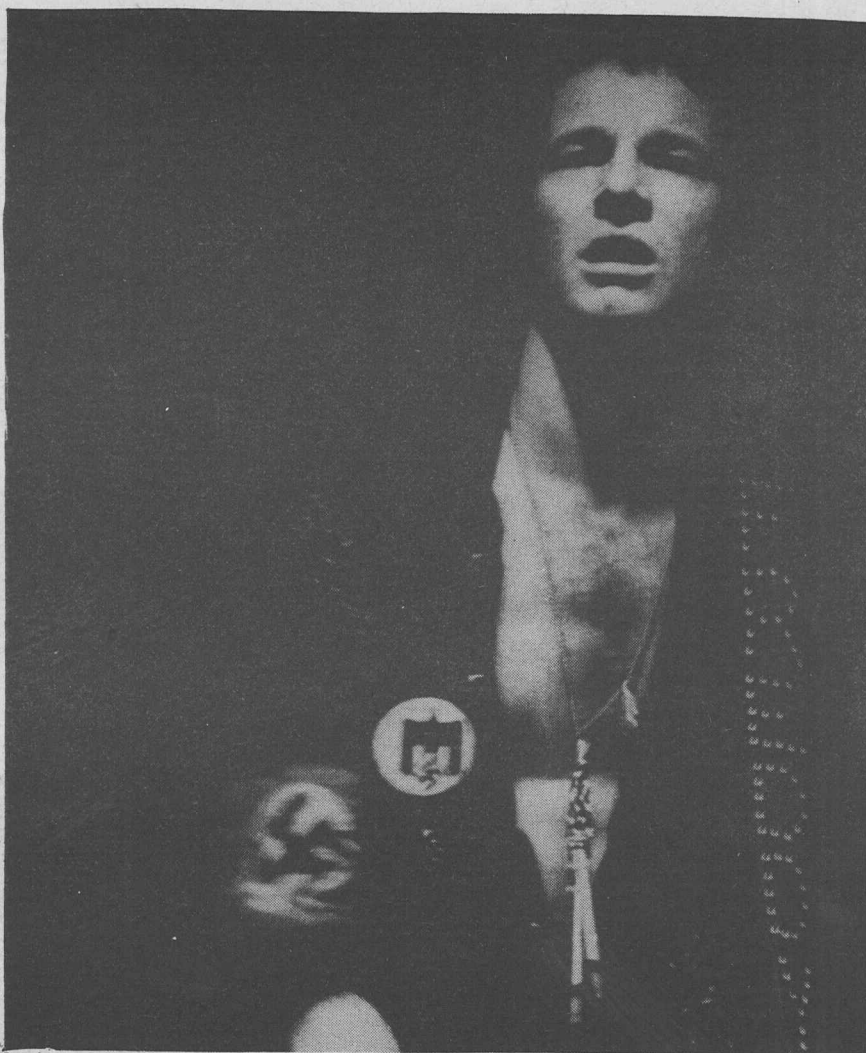
Now let's not say anymore about humble beginnings and all that shit. It's a year later and a dozen punk bands have risen and fallen in Toronto in the meantime. We're concerned right now with the Viletones, and it's a crucial time for the boys. They've become one of the most popular as well as one of the best-established groups here. It's really the only band that's acquired any degree of international celebrity as well, on the strength of their first E.P. overseas and a handful of uncompromising performances in the Big Apple. From what they tell me, managers have always been a problem. Sure, they had backers to put record sessions and equipment together obviously. But a good manager's job is to put his artists in the best possible light in front of the greatest number of people. What I mean by 'best light' is not the kind of calculated manipulation or whatever it takes to create a commercial impression, but to allow the artist to deal with his audience on his own best creative terms. The problem the Viletones have is that everybody, past managers especially, seems to have used the band as so much grist for their own conceptual mill (usually in conjunction with some artscheme masterplan) and pretty much denied the boys the benefit of the schematic doubt. In fact, the Viletones collectively and individually constitute a motherlode of workable and well thought out ideas.

If you begin from the basic assumption that the true face of the established culture in this country and the ideology that maintains the agencies of popular control like television, music biz, and the Secret Service (R.C.M.P.) are *indeed* fascist, then those who tamper with the veil that disguises that ideologic so determinedly will be playing with dynamite, and risking much more than the simple disdain of polite society. The Viletones rip the veil away, spit in the face of kanadian kulture and laugh at the predictable outrage. But they suffer for it.

"Of course it's parody but most people who listen to us don't catch it," Freddy Pompeii once explained to me over the counter at New Rose. "When we first started we wanted to make a joke out of all the Nazi stuff."

To be misunderstood is not necessarily to suffer. But to be one of the most dynamic and entertaining rock bands around and not be able to make an album, play the major showcases in town (Horseshoe excepted), be heard on the radio — all this crappy treatment after garnering more unsolicited mainstream and trade press in a year, that is to say, more exposure than Acme Records Ltd. could hope to buy with an army of press agents, and after selling at least a few thousand of records (Top of Pops in England) around the world — it sort of gets to you. You know? But perhaps such is the lot of the rocker with a conscience.

I don't want to give the impression that I'm working the Viletones off as pillars of integrity sacrificed on the altar of puritan repression in entertainment industry drag. I have the utmost confidence that the band is going to survive for a long time and achieve whatever degree of success they can stomach. They have the will, first of all, and the balls to survive and understand that small successes have a cumulative effect in building for the top. And I can't stress enough the fact that the band is *good*, and developing all the time along more and more interesting lines.



GAIL BRYK

You may have noticed, if you've caught them recently, that while the Dog remains the band's figurehead and always will, Freddy Pompeii in spirit and intent is the real leader; in control on stage every minute. He seems to be single-handedly molding the group. I've talked with Fred about Punkadelic, which, insiders say, is going to be the Next Big Thing after Powerpoop is exposed as the fraud it is. All Punkadelic means is punk with guitar solos. Which should mean the return of improvisation to rock where it always belonged, now that punk has pretty well saved its neck for a few more years. Listen to Freddy stretch out on guitar these days with his fuzz box snarling if you want to be the first on your block to dig what's gonna be happening all over the place next year. They're even talking about adding another guitar player to push the experiment further.

And the songs. The new stuff is sounding indisputably more pop. The logic and force of good precision duo vocals on choruses is not lost on the Dog and Chris Hate. A new single is ready and due for release; two of the best numbers (Danger Boy/Swastika Girls) with fiercely melodic hooks. Since they can't get play here, the boys have been saving their hard earned dollars to go to England to release the record and follow their main chance. I don't see how they can fail. It's a brilliant move. Will they come back as conquering heroes (anti-heroes?) in the great Canadian tradition of slaying the dragon in a far land? Will they come back at all? Let's hope so. In years to come, if there are still people writing about stuff like this, the Tones will be remembered and celebrated as crucial in the development of Toronto rock.

Not so long ago, at the Existors' Too Good To Be True party (you should've been there), Nazi Dog, surrounded by a retinue of acquaintances and fans, was telling us he was considering changing his name (his chosen and troublesome one) following a recent change of heart. Was he talking about a humanist conversion?

"I can't really talk about it. It's too personal," he said.

A political conversion?

"What are you gonna call yourself," Dr. Bourque asked him, standing nearby, "Comrade Dog?"

The Viletones are a group who seem to appreciate the necessity and desirability of change for its own sake. Not misbegotten angels by any means. Not deaf to the sound of opportunity knocking. But always, since they've been around, indicators of shifting situations, faintly obvious traces which manifest themselves in a gesture, a word on the street, a code. Mirrors. Public preoccupations. The right times produce the right people for the right places. And the Viletones carry on.

SO WHAT

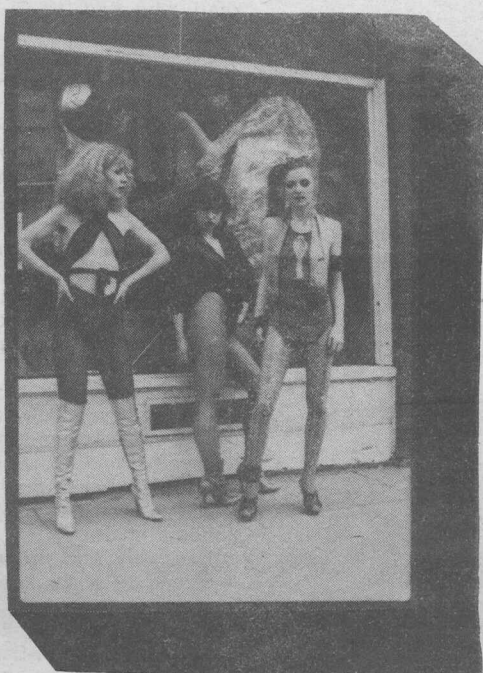
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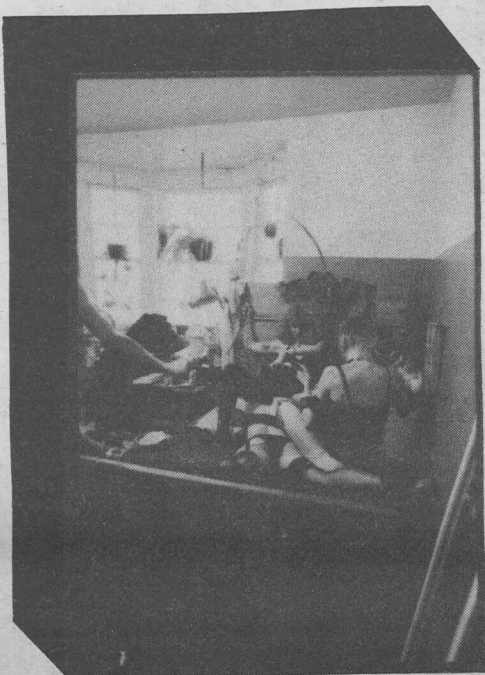
Margaritha

Passion

Patzy Poison

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IS THE STORY



R. BOWES

By Kirk LaPointe

He's been called Prince Charmless, the Woody Allen of rock, and Buddy Holly with atrophy, but I think this 22-year-old, pigeon-toed, nearsighted, former computer programmer for a cosmetic firm, is the most alluring item rock and roll has to offer these days. [We think he's an easy out for the Biz to deal with new wave.]

He's Elvis Costello, nee Declan McManus, and although it may be sad commentary on the times, he is the most promising prospect to rear its head from the new wave/powerpop onslaught. [The one the industry feels comfortable with.]

His direct-drive performances are deceptively minimalist efforts in rock and roll. The charm of Costello lies in his unique brand of complex simplicity. While the resulting music in his performance sounds sparse, even banal, it is an uncluttered brilliance hiding behind the guise of simplicity. For, although Costello sounds as common as any first or second generation rock star, he is the visionary of the decade. [Come now, Kirk.] At least, he offers more in the way of a refreshing, almost innocent approach towards music than anyone else around.

Still, the cynic inside me tells me that Elvis is not the uncompromising innocent that he portrays on stage and on vinyl. His performances are calculated, almost contrived attempts at creating an idiosyncratic persona. While there is conviction in what Elvis says, he is an unconvincing introvert. He basks in the attention, but he just doesn't let on.

Costello's two albums are ample demonstrations of understated musical prowess and lip-biting lyricism that can

O.K., FIRST OF ALL,
HOW COME
KIRK LAPOINTE GOT
A PASS TO THE
MOCAMBO SHOW
& NOT ME?

I MEAN, NOT TO
BE PETTY BUT I
WAS PRETTY SUS-
PICIOUS OF OLD
ELVIS. TO BEGIN
WITH & I CAN'T
REALLY GO ALONG...

combine the punch of an early Gene Vincent and a late Bruce Springsteen. Comparisons, in this case though, should be thrown out the window. Elvis is an entity unto himself. Even Dan Hill hasn't come this far in so short a time.

On his new album, *This Year's Model*, Costello plummets into a much more complex presentation in his music. The production work is sharper, with much more focus than on *My Aim Is True*. There is even stereo.

Surprisingly, the best song on the import release, "I Don't Want To Go To Chelsea", isn't on the domestic pressing. Instead, Radio Radio is substituted in its place. Costello uses the keyboards much more effectively on the album, and he tends to give way to more soloing. That isn't to say that the disc isn't full of teamwork. Indeed, the sum total of the band's talents far exceeds their individual music skills. It's a tough album. Elvis is still angry.

My only concern with a long-term Elvis fixture in music, is how representative he'll be of my generation. It has been necessary for all prominent music figures to convey an image, something we can either admire or identify with. At present, Elvis is a soulful singer in a soul-less body. The only people who could identify with someone like Elvis are the skinny wimps you and I used to beat upon in grade school.

His band, consisting of Bruce Thomas on bass, Steve Naive (now there's an ironic name) on keyboards and Pete Thomas on drums, is equally mysterious. People may not tire of Costello's music, but they may grow impatient with his reticence.

He is still a shade too eccentric to be admired, much less revered, for a long period of time.

OH, I LIKE HIM,
HE'S CLEAN.



WITH ALL THIS
MANIA AROUND
THIS GUY JUST
FROM WHAT
I'VE HEARD ON
RECORD. IT
ALL SOUNDS
LIKE FOLK-
ROCK FOR
FUCK'S SAKE!
SUITABLY
SPICED WITH
PENT-UP
EVERYWIMP
OBSCURA-BABBLE
SO THAT SOME
MIGHT SAY...

ELVIS

&

NICK

YOU

CAN

FOOL

SOME,

ETC.

IT'S PUNK ROCK
OR SOMETHING.
"SOMETHING" BEING
NEW WAVE...
JESUS CHRIST,
NOT THAT.
I MEAN IS ELVIS
COSTELLO
JOHNNY ROTTEN'S
LEGACY IN 1978?
IS THIS GUY THE
CROWNING LIGHT
OF EVERYTHING
1977 PROMISED?
READ ABOUT IT
IN 'NEW MUSIC'
OR SOMEPLACE.
NOT IN SHADES.

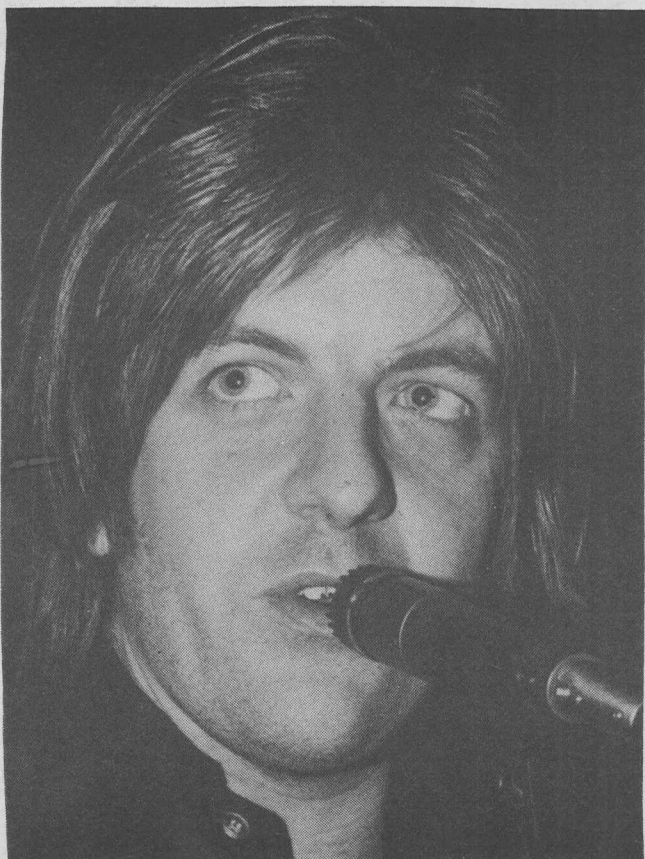
Nick Lowe's name has graced countless albums, both in a musical and production capacity. As Costello's ears, he has served as producer on the two discs, as well as albums by Graham Parker, Dave Edmunds and The Damned.

The former guitarist with Brinsley Schwartz (which also spawned members of Graham Parker's band) has since embarked on what seems like an endless string of solo careers, receiving lukewarm commercial and critical attention.

Now, armed with a substantial ducat-filled contract from Columbia in North America, Lowe is launching his own band with a new album, *Pure Pop For Now People*. The disc, originally entitled *Jesus Of Cool* (too controversial for any powerpopper attempting to latch onto the common denominator), is a rather mild exploration into several idioms. The album cover is an indication of how many bases Lowe attempts to touch before he rounds for home. Bluntly put, it's diffuse.

When Lowe recently graced the stage of the El Mocambo for the Elvis Costello encores, he shoved the high-pitched evening into neutral. Better things should be expected from him fronting his band. Among his band members will be Dave Edmunds (remember "I Hear You Knockin'" from 1972?), whose *Get It* album last year was one of the most underrated discs of 1977. Lowe's production work, as always, was to-the-point. No excessive dubbing, just a wall of one-takes and two-takes flying your way.

Lowe must be considered as a separate item from Costello. Naturally, he pales in comparison to the King. But, by himself, Lowe is a rather subdued, yet substantial musician who has a lot to offer on his own. His approach may not be as angry as that of Costello, but it may be a little more level-headed and realistic. Still, he has a lot more proving to do to his audience than does Costello. It may be *Pure Pop*, but the *Now People* may remain unconvinced.



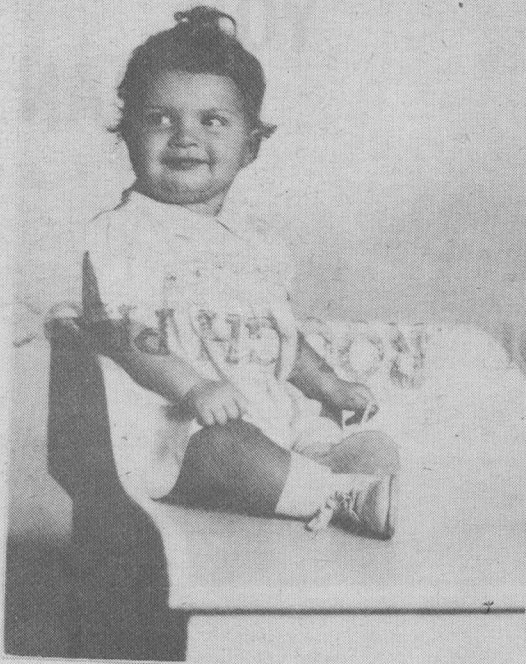
P.L. NOBLE

Martha & the Muffins

My Life Story, pt. 1. by Martha Johnson
as told to Steven Davey
family snaps by J. Johnson



My Birthday! Sister Jane ponders what Mom brought home from the hospital.....



My first Publicity Shot! Dad was a photo-bug and I mugged for the cameras.....



On the Road..... Door to Door! where mod girls go, fashion follows.....



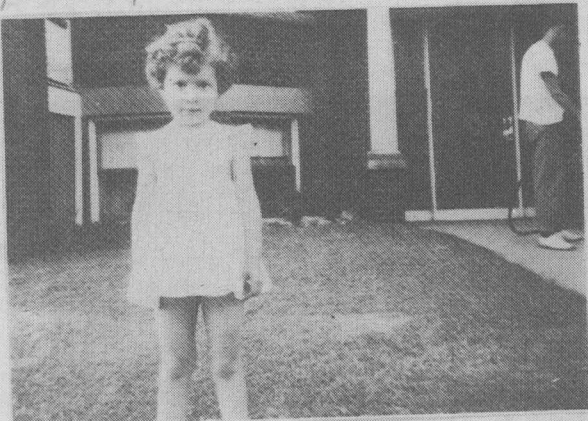
Rocket to Stardom! an early devotee of supermarket spaceships, I dreamt of becoming an astro-nette alongside TV space hero Captain Video.....



Born on the Bayou! Soaking up the atmosphere at Fenton Falls....



Picnic at Jackson's Point..... with Granny, Uncle Morris, + Aunt Eilene



A-TEN-SHUN! Standing on guard by lawn in High Park.....



The Johnson Girls + '53 Pontiac! an "emergency" stop on a family outing, always cutting up.....



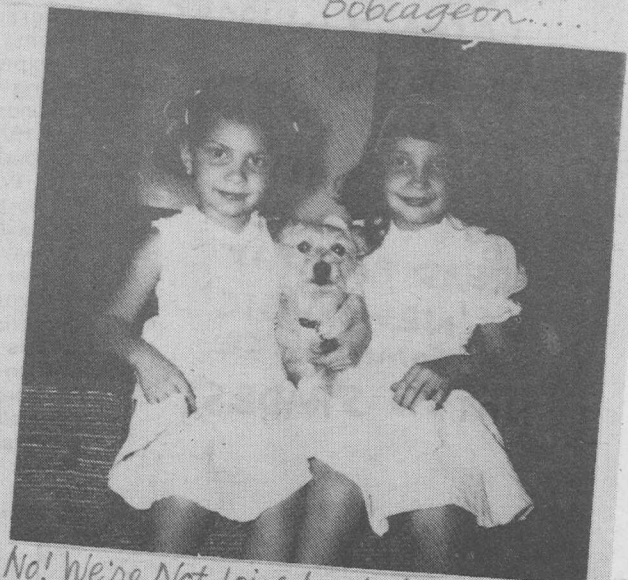
Caught the Culprit!..... here I've lassoed Jane by the lake at Bobcageon.....



A Baby Brother!..... young David grew up to play guitar for the Doncasters....



Six Candles and a Cake! 10 more years 'til my sweet Sixteen...



No! We're Not Joined at the Hip! Toby the terrier and Jane (1 to 5)

THE CURSE:

GIRLS



HAVE

GOT IT COVERED

By Sheila Wawanash

It had to become a perfectly logical fascination.

It started for me as soon as I first heard the name. I supposed that an all girl band calling themselves The Curse had to have brass and a sense of humour. I hoped that it might indicate another shift in women's attitudes to themselves and performance. Six months ago, a friend of mine wrote for the Globe and Mail that The Curse was a "shocking instance of self-possessed ironizing". I crossed my fingers, guessed she was right, and waited to see for myself what something like that might look, sound, and act like.

When I did at last see The Curse for the first time it was at the Isabella; that small, low, raucous and generally overcrowded room that reminds me of nothing so much as A Cellar. Of all the few local venues it was where the scene was finding its concentrated levels from time to time. What struck me about the Isabella is the (admittedly circumscribed) diversity of what I've found represented there when one of Toronto's dinosaur punk bands — ie. one that has a strong following, and has survived at least close to a full year — is playing. It isn't long before you start doing what everyone no doubt hopes you will, which is to recognize members of other bands, and assorted fans and hangers-on ranging from those who are wearing their oldest straight-legged jeans and newest chains-pins-padlocks-collars, to others still in overalls and all-purpose imported T-shirts. Sometimes there are inquisitive regulars left over from other interest groups in the neighbourhood, or somebody's parents.

It's probably not surprising that a parallel diversity dominates the interactions too. There are a few recognizably heterosexual couples in and out of groups of friends and singles. There are attempts to renew or pick up on acquaintance relationships. Some of the behavior is overtly "male" and can lean towards pinching provocative asses. The female charms thus solicited sometimes respond with patient forbearance — or a quick one straight back and hardly looking. Often, there are women together in fond embraces that may be flexible enough to shift to or include certain men. Boys having a night out together seem to be more traditional; they concentrate on getting drunk or watching whatever is going on. I would describe the dominant mood as one of friendly camaraderie. But here and there an out and out incapacitation can be spotted, scuffles occasionally turn into something approaching the serious end of urban frustration's scale, while in a relatively quiet backwater of this social new wave someone is getting his hair cut with what looks like a rusty pair of nail scissors.

I'd already missed a set that night, waiting upstairs for a space to open. Everything was already in this advanced state of scenic whatever by the time I was finally introduced to The Curse phenomenon. It was likely enough opportune.

First, while I was still smoking a joint somewhere, two imposingly fabulous women came through the room. Both were wearing tight, exotically "glamorous" clothes under wild, wonderful manes of crimped and coloured coiffure. Next came something completely different, a

substantial figure wearing a black leather jacket with a white silk scarf knotted over it. While a crowd of admirers hovered about them and their equipment the three took their places. The fragile blonde arranged herself among her drums. The luscious brunette added a guitar to her glistening red plastic ensemble. The tough looking lady in leather strapped on a bass.

All of this took a while, you understand. The stage at the Isabella is small, unraised; in fact undistinguished in most ways from everything that surrounds it. And the girls by no means had it to themselves. I thought at first that they didn't, perhaps, know quite how to deal with their own technology. But then it began to seem that they were more like unusually patient with their retinue's apparent need to feel appreciated. So quite a few people milled about and laughed and chatted until the lead singer came on.

When Mickey Skin made an appearance she didn't look or act much like anyone I'd seen yet there, or anywhere. She was wearing a pink beret over a short, dark crop (later, she changed it for a helmet in the same shade). There was a pink wool glove on one hand and another pinned to her chest. Predominantly she was attired in a vastly different perversion of classic white on black than the one the bassist had assembled. Mickey's was topped by a sort of grubby tutu. She joined in the good-natured chaffing momentarily, then launched them all directly into "My Boy". It went on from there.

From the first I was mesmerized, awed, overwhelmed. From time to time I jumped up and down; sometimes I sat with a distinct chill tensing my spine; most often I found myself laughing. Here indeed it was a last, something I'd hoped for and never quite seen before. I wasn't sure what it was I expected after feminism, or what I was going to think and say about it. I still wasn't sure, watching these women. I felt a little like Alice after the looking glass. But whatever it was I was sure they had, and induced for others, an astonishing range of arresting ideas.

Now I may be more like a sucker than most for what comes to me in the shape of lively notions that take some effort to grasp. And the best, most exciting kind always leave a residue of what can't be accounted for in the shifting columns of intellectual overdrive. It might be simplest, at this point, to jump cut to a conclusion it took discussion, interviews, and several reruns of first impressions for me to arrive at.

In its barest form my argument runs that The Curse cover the contradictions and range of theatrical possibilities traditionally available to women (which, for the sake of simplicity can be assimilated to the traditional images available generally, that is, virgins and whores, or Barbie dolls and nympho freebies, with occasional dykes and madonnas to sharpen up male anxieties). Along the way they cop a bit from other traditions and invent a few new twists that are all their own. What may be most important, however, is that they manage to accomplish all this because they've thought about such stereotypes and reacted to the dominant ideologies they are based in about what females and female performers are — or should be if they knew what was right and good for them. The Curse seem to know and project that these conceptions and this ideology are not something out there somewhere, or

something somehow internalized either. The deformative realities of lived, daily experience can be devastatingly informative when they are demonstrated in certain forms of exaggeration, parody, wit.

What I could make out of Mickey's lead vocals was a set of high-pitched, provocative taunts. "Teenage Meat"; "If It Tastes so Good, Eat it Yourself"; "Eat Me". She said, "I've got little candies", and proceeded to hurl, with a strong arm, showers of Hallowe'en kisses. Next time it was tiny colored plastic toys to take home. But it wasn't only lyrics and patter that intervened in this way. When a fracas broke out off to one side of her, she claimed she didn't want to be distracted by any more messing around. "When I fight, it's to kill. If ya wanna bother, I wanna see blood," she snarled, in a queer, flat monotone that seemed somewhere between little girl naivete and a very grown up sense of the risk she might be taking. Even if the voice did remind me of Louise Lasser's playing at Mary Hartmartyrdom, I didn't know what to make of such a remark until I collated it with Mickey's control of potential violence all around her. What she does is to move straight in on it, neutralizing it with the forceful blend of confidence and renzy in her own movements and presence. She's not the conventional feminine peacemaker. She's a woman there to do her job, come what might of the contradictions inherent in it and others she has the courage and savvy to generate on her own. Part of Mickey's skill lies in handling a crowd that is anything but passively entertained. Another part lies in making sure that intense excitement is indeed what the crowd gets if that's what they came for. If she didn't know what she was doing, and why, the risks could very well turn out to be more or less than anything calculated.

Mickey does take very real risks, however. Doing so, she also makes real challenges. At the Isabella she played it closer than close to a lot of edges. Physically, she was out front, up on the tables, making dashing raids into the rough and ready bunch of male admirers clustered to one side of the band. When she tried to stay on stage members of this group approached her — punching. It seemed like the safest place for her was in the middle of any action, and safer still if she got to it first. So, she led a consistently energetic dialectic between initiating responses and reacting to them. She was the well lit fuse to a blast of dynamite.

Neither was she really alone out there doing her act. Often she was half of a pair of dynamically tough performers. Mickey and Dr. Bourque (the bassist) tend to play off one another in a series of interchanges that sometimes made me think of collaborations between certain Rolling Stones, for example. Both of these women — who, you may recall, shared a colour scheme — are more substantial than the conventional lean, barbed-wiry athlete/aesthetic of new wave bodies. In fact, they made me think of some of my heavier feminist friends.

But none of the girls exactly grabs the spotlight from any of the others. Counterpointing the team of tough ones that get around onstage is another that is lovely to look at by avant/traditional standards, and who tend to keep to fixed positions. Patzy Poison's drum set immobilizes her in one sense, of course;





Trixie Danger stands off and away from being bumped by the agile and unpredictable Mickey. I later learned that interaction with Mickey came naturally to Dr. Bourque, while it makes Trixie lose her place. But Trixie and Patzy are the overtly glamorous ones. Even if they were just standing around (which they aren't in performance) they would attract more than a share of attention. You'd think that with such major angles covered the girls couldn't lose. But sometimes it seems that they can't win either. When they got tired of having to repeat assurances that they weren't all dykes in blue jeans, they started to switch to other images, with Patzy and Trixie polarizing into plastic. Now they're told they're taking advantage of being attractive women.

Yet apart from these dramatic visual pairings and oppositions are others no less fundamental. Cutting across one set of them is the fact the Dr. Bourque and Trixie are biological sisters. Cutting under another is the consideration that the two most aesthetically different are musically The Curse's rhythmic bottom, as bass and drums. Mickey Skin and Patzy Poison also struck me as polar — but not unrelated — strians of the exotic available as images of contemporary womanhood. If Patzy looks like the fashion model she is (though largely untamed by the industry), Mickey takes as many pains to look and act and sound like a high definition individualist untamed by anything.

But whatever else they are, singly or in various kinds of combinations, they're always women. There's no real question of anyone's catching or busting or passing the balls that so-called sexual liberation made everyone pretty uneasy about. Nor is it as if they "throw their holes in anyone's face", as Dr. Bourque put it when I interviewed them. They simply never forget that they are representative(?) females, and make sure that an audience also bears that in mind. When they give a party, their props tend towards what might be described as vulgar if they weren't effected with equally alert humour and equilibrium. There's usually a tampon in the punch acquiring colour. Baggies of red jello fly or lie around suggestively. Of course such antic notions can still be described as vulgar. They can't be dismissed as such, though. It is in small, thoughtful details like these that one begins to understand just how many important angles the girls do have covered and the nature of the challenge they really make to various prevalent preconceptions of what constitutes femininity and good taste.

Naturally, there's a venerable tradition of serio-comic, self-parodic raunch in female performance even if it's never been exactly mainstream. In spite of the "women's movement" (because of it?), I couldn't say I find its more recent types especially exemplary. I wouldn't put Bette Midler in the same class as Mae West. I might put Patti Smith there, but I would be equivocal about the reasons (the male-impersonation, "one of the boys in the band" argument I'm not too sure of in either case). But then I might put her in the line of Judy Garland, too, with different equivocations about delicate, dynamite flowers who can't really do it alone after all.

But The Curse? Well, like I was getting around to saying, what seems to be the issue here is, among other things, the crucial question of language and its (de)formative values. I can think of several ways to introduce this theme, such as feminist interrogations of the phallogocentric underpinnings of psychoanalytic discourse, for example, and the concomitant image of women as so many smooth surfaces interrupted by the wound that is the sign of our "lack" (ie. our castration and "envy"). Or consider the political use to which Rastafarians put the language of the dominant class when they turn English into something incomprehensible to native users who had, in colonial times, programmatically denied it to black slaves. Now it seems to me The Curse have hit upon similar sets of strategies. They refer to their appearances as "shocking experiments in mass excommunication", and say that they "couple shock tactics and therapy to take a positive stand for Woman, the universal underdogess". They mention their "innovative use of black humour", which may be the feature that some people miss entirely. I don't know why but it seems it goes right over a lot of heads. We can start with the name itself, of course. It's an intriguing ambiguity; either what women aren't supposed to do, or what they do periodically, though it's rarely mentioned in polite company. In fact, the World's Oldest Disease is (like its oldest profession) the bloody fundament, so to speak, of female (self) abuse in practically all present or historical cultures. It's the source of women's powerful fascination for men — and of their ostracism as the unclean beast in societal closets.

The Curse simply takes this term (or these terms) and utters it loud and clear on several levels of expression. It is an inherently political position. Yet it is also, as we might at this point understand the word, post-political. Especially if we are at all convinced — which I am not — that a political stand for women is necessarily defined by or confined to whatever anyone meant by "femist" in the first place. It's not the same thing at all as saying there's something anti-feminist about The Curse. In fact, they don't seem to be anti-anything except weak-willed consumerformism. And if anything they strike me — with much relief — as one of the things that had to come next, as inevitable as The Backlash to women's feminist aspirations, no doubt. They aren't easily defined or confined to any particular set of interests; least of all, perhaps, by the sense of having A Cause or some such born-again mission. Oh, they do and they don't present something like possible role models in that sense of "positive heroine" feminist realism that's been all the rage in the separatist media for too long now. And they are conscious of it as a factor in their representations of a new kind of outrageously aggressive, confident womanhood. But that's nothing like the whole point I want to make and if it were I wouldn't feel compelled to make it.



PLUNOBE

Neither is what I would say about their stand vis a vis being artists. They reject the term, in fact, and they probably aren't "artists" in the kind of narrow sense that makes us put quotation marks around the word. But it seems to me an irreducible fact about them that they are responsible to the fundamental claim an artist has upon us if we are to be informed by art at all. And that they are responsible in a way that is all but unheard of from women performers. When I talked to them, and we got around to the subject of just what it is, and what it is they think they're doing, we talked in terms of "effects". There, if anywhere, I heard in a single word what confirmed my intuition about their significance. I've waited a long time for women to start putting it this way. If the world isn't ready for them, that's one way of saying what's still very wrong with it. Because The Curse get onto as many stages as they can find to be *heard*. And to make some difference.

Think of almost any female performer you care to. The B Girls are to The Curse as, say, Spanky and Our Gang were to The Fugs, so I'll say no more. But think, for another example, of Michaela Jordana. It may be a telling point that to do so, you'll probably screen out the rest of The Poles to concentrate. I don't think it's just because Michaela's the only woman in that ensemble, or because she dominates and rivets her audience's attentions. Maybe it's because her relationship with the rest of the group seems to parallel her relationship with her fans and hecklers. There's interaction and response, but also, predominantly, manipulation. Michaela plays close as long as she's in control. She gives her best in the ring pretty well every time. But she keeps the ropes up.

Now I think a female performer like Michaela has cause for all that, and more. She's conscious of being an artist and there's powerful self-expression involved in everything she does. Her lyrics and self-

presentation can be tough and taunting enough ("Got no time to waste on you," "don't push me too far"), and she can range from predatory to shawomanistic. But equally often there's an undertone of awe-struck, vulnerable insecurity. She talks a lot about needing "love" as the ambience for her performance, and this motivation is no doubt a source of her appeal and her power — as it has been for every female artist I can think of. Somehow we haven't been really women if we haven't acknowledged that motive. But it isn't what makes art or artists.

The Curse rubs against such ingrains of female performance as autobiography, self-expression, the need to be loved and thought nice girls, really, whatever. Of course they love having fans and they get depressed, like anyone else, at working so hard and still not seeing much reward or work coming their way. But it doesn't seem to be the main thing on their minds. It isn't the main thing in their material either. In effect what they do is oddly impersonal. Their songs are usually about things they've noticed around them — generally in the media — and thought about or at least reacted to. And their stage presence is arguably just that; an "act".

It is in senses like these that distance and irony and several kinds of self-possession and not just a consequence but essential to their conceptions and to a response to them. It is and it isn't all about "them" or us, after all. It seems to me that's why they can play so close and cut to the bones of so much ideological assumption. If that sounds like a paradox or a contradiction, I'd simply remind you that Brecht was talking about something like this in theatre quite a long time ago, or that reading someone recent, like Roland Barthes or Umberto Eco, will tell you much about how illusions of realism and self-expression (matching the word to the thing, with windows upon the world) are so many specific mystifications.

What I can't really tell you, however, is how much fun The Curse are to see, to hear, or to talk to. You may be interested to know, for example, that the girls would like to take time out of their busy schedules to conduct a class for male groupies (groupers? gropies?), in proper deportment. And I highly recommend their new single. It's a demonstrable development from their musical beginnings, which were interesting enough. It's been one of the paradoxical features of punk, of course. On one hand it looks and sounds like part of the general over-reaction to women's aspirations, both musically and lyrically. On the other, there have never been so many female performers doing and saying so much in rock, with so much definable difference between the gravelly male and high-pitched, screaming female vocal styles in the form. The Curse are only one of several groups that have taken advantage of a style that didn't demand virtuoso musicianship (that positively discouraged it, in fact), and that was not unprepared to accommodate them. But I haven't heard anything yet that excites me more than "Killer Bees", with its witty flight-of-the-bumblebee background and the quirky rhythmic changes powered by the drumming. Both sides are lyrically commendable, however, taking off from (and disengaging) several media-induced manias that are international on one side and topically local on the other.

Whenever I talk to members of this band I find all or any of them bright, articulate, easy and fun to be around. It's generally entertaining as well, so that none of this has turned out quite as intended. When I first heard them their parents were all there too. I hatched a plot for a story that would look like Police Gazette, a punk expose featuring photos of the girls' folks (their faces would be blacked out), and copy that would read between International Enquirer and True Confessions. I would call it The Birth of The Curse, or something, and as the idea grew details started falling in place. Like the fact that they practice over the only crotchless underwear boutique in town. I thought a polaroid captioned "it started here, in this..." and so on.

When I talked to the girls the format got a little twisted. They loved the idea. But if it was in any sense an "interview" I conducted, I wouldn't care to say who was actually responsible for what I recorded. They had as many questions as I did, and as many answers. They wanted to know just what I wanted to say about them. So I asked what their favorite colors were and there were so many we all ended up just laughing and drinking more beer again, while Dr. Bourque, between belches, managed to say that I should "just say the girls have got it covered", in rainbows.

Which, of course, seemed about right. I added a bit myself, naturally, and I can never resist a last word either. Simply catch them at it yourself, every chance you get. It's important.

poetry corner!



EXISTERS

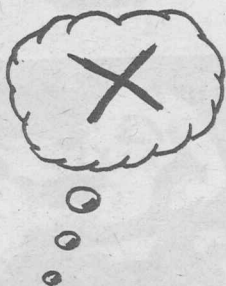
RED!

SLICE OF LIFE

I WANNA BE IN THE PAPERS
I WANNA BE ON T.V.
I WANNA BE A HISTORY-SHAPER
YOU BETTER PAY ATTENTION TO ME
THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE TO SAY ABOUT IT
THAT HASN'T ALREADY BEEN SAID
YOU'RE ALL SLEEPING SO I GOTTA SHOUT IT
I'D RATHER BE RED THAN DEAD

EXISTERS - THE CUTTING EDGE!
EXISTERS - OUT ON THE LEDGE!
EXISTERS - A SHARPER KNIFE!
EXISTERS - A SLICE OF LIFE!

SHARP-SHOOT SNIPERS IN EVERY WINDOW
TANKS ROLLING THRU THE STREETS
IDENTITY CHECKS WHEREVER YOU GO
INVASION OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET
LIFE CAN BE SO DEPRESSING
IT'S REALLY GETTING OUT OF HAND
SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS NEED SUPPRESSING
JOIN THE PARTY X BAND



MICHAEL WURSTLIN

I WANT A GUN

SMOKIN BARREL
BODY IN A TRUNK
LITTLE SUB-MACHINE
ALL THAT JUNK
SURROGATE POWER
FEELS SO GOOD
COUNTER-REVOLUTION
YOU WOULD IF YOU COULD



I WANT A GUN
TO HAVE SOME FUN
GO ON THE RUN
I WANT A GUN
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

TAKE ME TO THE COURTHOUSE
RATTLE MY CUP
I'M LOOKIN FOR EXCITEMENT
I THINK I'LL BLOW IT UP
POLICE EVERYWHERE
ARMED TO THE TEETH
WHO ARE THEY PROTECTING?
WHO ARE THEY BENEATH?

REMEMBER: THINK X!

EURO-PUNK

who's got some VALSTAR?

BY OLIVIER COSSARD

In France, il faut crier fort pour se faire entendre.

Paris, july 77; in front of the Montparnasse station, wearing basket shoes and sweaty tee-shirt, and looking at hybrid whores going up and down the street. Her head totally shaved, a dark velvet overall covering her fragile body, and her tennis shoes banging the out-tuned piano, Elodie Lauten's high-pitched overbearing voice tears up the air of the little creperie where I'm sitting. Paris is now deserted by parisians and not invaded yet by bunches of rowdy american tourists. The few passionate fans left beneath the Left Bank sun, are quietly enjoying the bewildered intensity of this new punk reality slowly taking over the fossilized world of pop-music.

Flash-back joke; May 68 marx the upshot of a slow rise of militantism, criticism, and refusal. Dolphy, Hendrix, the Seeds, Magma, Gong or Komintern; consciousness rises with the tortured musical spheres of the post JFK-death era. Ten years later, after hippies, communes, riots and demonstrations, maoism, spangles and flipouts, everything starts again. After Elvis and Liverpool, *PUNK*. In France, as usual, a little underground scene plugs itself into the new power and helps the emergence of new sensibilities.

Punk in N.Y., London, Beirut, Tokyo and Paris. For the first time ever, Paris is riding on top of the wave: english bands find more gigs in France than in England and every day there is a new band formed in Paris.

Paris, winter 76: from "republique" to "les halles" one has to run fast if he wants to catch everybody in total action. Jam, Damned and Clash are shaking the walls of the "palais des glaces" (palace of mirrors), a full of mirrors creepy old-fashioned cinema, while Wayne County and Police are turning everybody on in the "Gibus", the old rock n' roll temple of Paris, now the blackhole center of the new wave.

You had to show your inscribed invitation to be admitted to this elegant party at "Beaubourg" and a lot of people (at least five that I know) were refused entry, but what an agonizing laugh then to see Andy Warhol with spit drooling down his face, being accused of eating with Farah (the Shah's wife, not Fawcett) and being given a backstage pass to an asylum while he was dedicating his new book. Punks had definitely made their way in the "chic" world of good manners and big business disguised as art novelties.

Paris, january 77: wood of Vincennes — 11.30. Pierre Benain, former journalist for Rock et Folk, Malcom McLaren's friend, contributor to italian Vogue and tonight concert-promoter (THE night, THE concert) opens for me a little backstage door to get into the Chalet du Lac. The Chalet is re-opening after a year of renovations and the Sex Pistols are revving up for their parisian premiere. At the front door, 400 persons push, shout and are trying to manoeuver their way in through all possible scams. The place is already packed and the Pistols just kill everybody that night. By the end of the concert, the waiters are shaking into convulsions on top of the bar while Johnny Rotten splashes the crowd of pogo-dancers with beer. This concert definitely buried alive the few hippies and leftists still hanging around with their long hair.

T'es punk toi?: yes they were; Pain Head, Loose Heart, Angel Face, Lou's, Telephone, Elodie Lauten, Stinky toys, Warm Gun, Asphalt Jungle, Bijou, R. Beaulieu et les Starters, Starshooter, Electric Callas, Marie et les Garçons, Shakin' Street, Metal Urbain ... want some more???

It was not too hard to find and create new places for close encounters of the punk kind; the center of Paris was a gigantic muddy construction hole and on the other side of the street the colored pipes of Beaubourg were shocking the "bourgeois" living in the XVIIIth Century buildings just in front. Besides, the rue St Denis was and still is the biggest redlight district of Paris after Pigalle. The street is a succession of antique shops, american bars, galleries, brothels, cheap arabian restaurants and popular cafes, pinball centers, sex shops and discreet gay discos. Punks came and blew the lid off: during the day punkrockers were easily seen around Marc Zermati's open market or in the street of la grande truanderie (the big con-plan); at night, getting drunk at "la coupole" in Montparnasse which had already endured the surrealist pranks and the Roxy Music/n.y. dolls glittering era, or rocking the Gibus, the Palladium or the Golf Drouot sometimes, the place where Twist all began. Paris was expecting Tom Verlaine but unfortunately it was the Ramones who flew in instead: they were too ugly and negligé, too american and not radical enough to please the parisians. The concert and the whole french tour turned in an enormous flop. It was much more worthwhile to be in Mont de Marsan, by the mediterranean sea, for the 2nd annual Europunk festival organized by M. ZERMATI. 5000 persons dropped in and for 3 days converted the whole quiet country town to the ecstasy of shock treatment. Some old sharks like Dr. Feelgood and the Hot Rods were there too, sharing the bill with the cream of european punk. The supporters did all they could to keep that palefaced-pimplepocked aspirin visage while the Damned and the Clash were fighting in the lobby of the hotel (Damned would not play if Clash's gigantic riot poster was still on stage during their set). But, oh, surprise! ... the best acts came from froggy bands; Little Bob Story imposed a simple, efficient, powerful and direct pre-punk rock n' roll while Stinky Toys (with the very famous and beautiful





Patrick Eudeline



MARIE ET LES GARÇONS

Ellie finally proved that they deserve better than the first page of Melody Maker they had a few months before: elegance and nihilism, beauty of ugliness and refusal of the standardized standards, Stinky Toys are reactionary and proud to be. French love contradictions...

By the end of the summer punk combos were proliferating like rabbits and most of them were creating their own labels to record the new music. Staring at the punk boom in England and the US, french record companies which are usually always dancing onestep backwards stopped spitting in the soup and began chasing punks out on the street to sign deals. Lou's, 4 girls who have just issued their first E.P., for CBS, are a good example of the uprising of the french new wave: lou's play a straight riffy rock n' roll slightly influenced by the Seeds and Velvet of 68 and know how to satisfy your ears with their bitter and virulent words about smokey nights and teen energy. You can usually meet them around 5:30 PM in the tiny cafe next to the Gibus and if you drink the same beer as her, Pamela Popo the singer will probably show you her outrageous tatoo: "we come from the street, but we refuse all tags or labels" says Tolim Toto the bassist, lighting a giant mecarillo cigar. Like the Curse from Toronto, Lou's will not abandon the microphone only to the hands of rock n' roll machos. Believe it or not and wait till you see them.

Patrick Eudeline is definitely one of the most talented personalities of the new wave: former rock-critic for Best magazine, he has always been one movement ahead of everybody, wearing make-up when everybody was turned on by Woodstock, wearing white leather when everybody was fascinated by the sexual ambiguity of recent decadent nights, his time has finally come; author of a book "l'aventure punk" he is also the leader of the oldest and most energetic parisian punk band: Asphalt Jungle. Their first EP with Rikki Darling on guitar, Henri on bass and Guido on drums imposed the new sound: saturated amplifiers, distorted and high-pitched mumbling voices, nervous riffs and unpardonable beat, you need a lot of valstar beer after an Asphalt concert. They don't play anymore for tired artists, blase and sleepy critics, or snobby hangarounds, and after touring the french provinces, no doubt they'll be the first french band to play CBGB'S; "a tout seigneur, tout honneur". [Marie et les Garçons did]

Starshooter are trying to prove that Paris is no more the center of France. Lyon has become an archetypal industrial modern city and has already its own immediately recognizable rock n' roll sound. Starshooter is the leader of this alpine ordeal; "their music makes you mad," once said a tired rock critic; they play a violent music filled with a lashing humour that corresponds exactly to the imagery of the british new wave. Their lyrics are angry and perfectly reflect the radical energy of the new generation. They like to play a raw and unrefined music and definitely avoid superficial flourishes in the tradition of the great M.C.5. A good reference for a promising band.

DISCOGRAPHY

Asphalt Jungle; E.P. cobra records CCB 740002 (distri. by Carrere).

Telephone; single; metro/hygiaphone; Tapioca records 10001.

Little Bob Story; single; all or nothing; RCA.

Little Bob Story; LP; high time; RCA.

Little Bob Story; LP; living in the fast lane; Crypto Zal6429.

Little Bob Story; LP; l.b.s.; Crypto Zal6415.

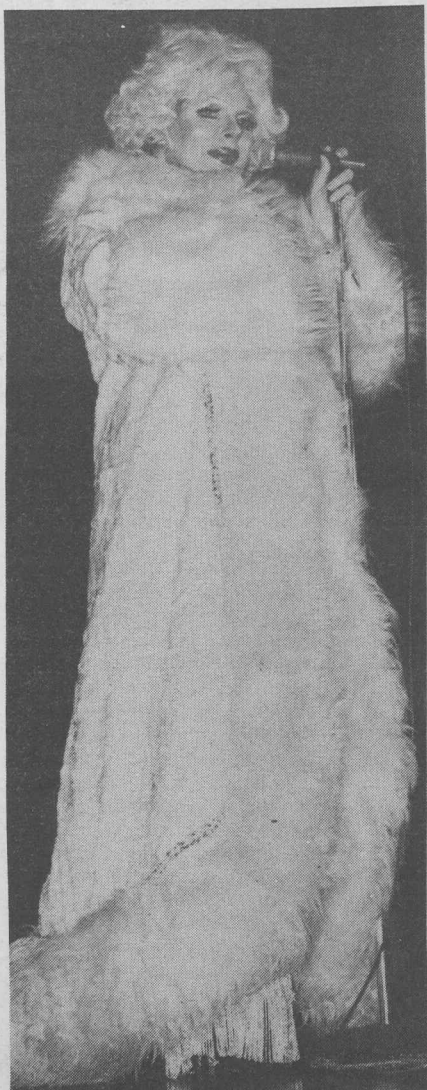
Bijou; single; danse avec moi/dinarock.

Bijou; LP; danse avec moi; Philips 9101138.

Starshooter; EP; Pathe marconi; 2C 00614487; distri EMI.

Lou's; EP; C.B.S.

Not Talking to Craig Russell



They used to say, in the Big Apple, that there were six million stories. Well, this ain't the Big One yet, there's likely less than half that number anyway — and this is only nearly one of them. But it's a pip.

It started when one of this here paper's young photogs wanted to interview Craig Russell, then appearing at the Imperial Room. It was a kinda kinky idea for a new wave paper, y'unnerstand. So of course it appealed to us right away. We thought Craig Russell might make a terrific cover girl, facing off with Nazi Dog for instance, maybe.

So Pete — that's what he calls himself, our photog, just Pete — made arrangements and went on down to see the show on opening night and got some great shots of several famous showbiz types who all seem to inhabit the body of an enigmatic figure who calls himself Craig Russell, some of the time.

Things were looking fine the next day when I rendezvoused with Pete to get the story. It was my first assignment as the new associate editor, after I'd gone along to look at Robert Gordon as some kind of not so innocent bysitter. This time I'd prepared myself. I had a notebook full of press clippings, and several pages of penetrating questions I might get around to asking. I had a hunch this wasn't going to be all that easy. I'd heard the target claim that Craig Russell was only an alias anyway, like Robin Turner had been in the *Outrageous* version of his sexual identity crises, or Mae West et al were in his stage act. Naturally, these days he said he knew just who and what he was, himself. But I'd had near-brushes before; listening in on what Dick Benner had to say about directing him; at the Etrog Awards (where I was furious that he didn't win and just missed telling him so because I was too busy making contemptuous faces at the vapid unvision of most of those who run Canada Babylon, and the terrible meal I was served); chatting with others who knew something about recent interviews with him and who assured me that getting "the real Craig Russell" to talk would be quite a coup these days.

Natchery, like anyone new on the force, I was hot for the challenge. There were a few things I wanted to check out myself too, mostly about performing across the sex-role stereotypes, self-possession and distantiating, that kind of shit, and irony. I figured maybe I'd set up dialogue with the quarry by suggesting some of what I'd tried to do in a novel I'd just finished. It wasn't entirely unrelated to the kind of manhunt this one might turn out to be 'cause it had a lot to do with sex and double living and styles and means of expression as minimum balances for creative disequilibrium.

But that was as far as our vision of what we were there for got us. It coulda been a project doomed from the start — from here, in any case, it's the facts and only the facts that matter.

Wednesday, March 1st. About 1:15. I met Pete in the lobby of the Royal York. No trouble spotting each other in all that pinstripe and plushy leather. I was wearing one of my flashiest numbers, a long red something Chinese with black and blue and white flowers, over a scant version of my grandmother's notion of slightly indecent underwear (she was smaller than I am, so it's now a little more indecent than she may have intended), and black velvet. Pete was carrying the contacts from the night before, and a cassette. I had my notebook in my bag. We put our heads together, looked at what he could make up as prints. Then we went up to the star's chamber. Or suite, or whatever they give stars to do it in, offstage — we never really found out that day.

We were met at the door by a very pretty face whose first name was Russell, and no relation we would care to make a note of here. We had some ideas, of course. The star himself, it seemed, was 1) in the bath, 2) without a voice, 3) unaware that we were unaware that all interviews had been cancelled that day. If we weren't from some TV station, there wasn't much could be done for us.

I probably coulda taken this guy out myself. But since he seemed to be only doing his job, I was gracious and said that of course we understood, we'd set it up for another time, and so on. The little prick seemed grateful and became, in his turn, gracious. We left a copy of *Shades*, and left.

The next week Pete and I both made the requisite number of phone calls to rearrange the interview. Oddly enough, we both ended up talking a couple of times to a woman who sounded more like a man. Specially when she was making obscene suggestions to Pete and assuring me she was straight. I never did figure out exactly what we said that prompted these responses but something, whatever it was, seemed to be laying a trail of coincidence, though it was probably another red herring, I thought.

Then, during the week, another development intervened that was close to the questions I'd meant to pose Craig Russell with in the first place. He'd finally won a best actor award at the Berlin Film Festival. I hadn't been too sure what he'd make of my probing the continuing necessity of Canadian artists having to make it elsewhere at the very moment he'd at last come back to his home town a conquering hero (and would he be offended if I called him that) in the Imperial Room. In other interviews, he seemed to be more interested in the idea of its ghosts than his own. The fact that he was now being heard where some of his originals had played seemed to have wiped out most of an undertone of bitterness about his struggling days and nights, here and there, in and out of the leather bars. The Berlin (shades of the past, and other decadent cabaret scenes) award could have been the answer to an inquiring reporter's prayers. If I couldn't open him up on that issue with it, I could at least flatter him enough to hope for something on others.

Another round. Wednesday again, March 8th this time, about the same time and same place. I was even more prepared: fresh press clippings, more dramatic ensemblage in cowed, classic black jersey with high black leather boots and a bit of pale pink silk over it all. I looked so good going out again for the story that I was (momentarily) promoted to co-editor.

Ditto to all the above about meeting Pete, looking at new contacts of this and that, and so on. Ditto, too, about the reception and story we got at the same door. Only this time the star's consort — or whatever — had just emerged from his bath and the star wasn't there at all. Which meant that at least we got to go in this time and examine the empty champagne glasses from which, I deduce, he drank. If called upon to testify, about all I could swear to was that the odour of the chambers was fetching and that these must be about the cleanest men I've ever encountered or been evaded by.

Things were still not hopeless, though they didn't look too good, what with variations in Craig's upcoming itinerary and my suspicion that *Shades* might somehow be paper non grata even to someone who, his friend assured me, never turned down an interview. I had other suspicions, too. Once, a while back, the details aren't important, I'd been on another caper myself, with the Festival of Festivals. I hadn't run into my man.

He hadn't been personally available for comment that time either, though the whole thing sometimes seemed like a showcase built around the film he starred in (or its local backers, maybe; they were certainly around enough). I had, natchery, kept my ear to the ground and my wits about me most of the time. And word implied then that Craig had a bit of a wild streak. I couldn't and didn't blame him of course. If anything, it piqued my interest in him further. It wasn't quite what I thought people meant when they asked if success would "spoil" someone if he did tend to get a little carried away from time to time when it looked like he might finally get famous

Or Robin Turner. Or Mae West,
or Judy Garland, or Anne Murray,
or Anita Bryant

Story by Sheila
Photos by Pete

enough to keep on doing what he was good at. But, apparently it had all been making him a difficult commodity for those who had a stake in his future to handle. And somebody always does when there's a high cost and pressure item like film in question.

Last fall, Craig had been (had been sent?) to New York to cut a record. This time he had been consigned to his mother's care. Pete and I pounded the walls a bit as we left, and glared at each other since there was nobody else to do it to, until an elevator arrived.

Then we made the phone calls all over again. The next day no one was answering in Craig's suite. Not even the toothsome Russell who shared it with our man (no relation, like I said) at the time we had arranged to make arrangements. From here on it was out of the Imperial Room's hands and out of their agents' as well. It looked like a dead end.

So far, I'd been level with everyone. I'd told them I was a fan and meant it. I loved the performance in *Outrageous*. In fact, I loved everything about the film. It's probably the first time I haven't felt I had to say something about a movie being really Canajun, ya know? Somehow it seemed to bring off every risk it ran and there were plenty. No one's attacked it yet outside Toronto, but I'd defend it by almost any standard.

What's more, I still think that female impersonation is a fascinating, difficult, and important form to acquire some understanding about. It is, whatever else it may be, one means of expression that inherently raises issues of sexual identity and roles and stereotyping, "acting" a "piece" (of what?). I'd been curious to know what, if anything identifiable, led someone like Craig Russell to make the selections he did. Was there a kind of female stereotype or style that seemed to draw him? Or was impersonation itself drawn to certain types and personalities? Did he find a gap or was there some range of convergence between types and public or private personalities, since he knew some of his originals fairly well? And did he think of his personnae (or theirs) as straight characterizations? Characterizing in the way he thought about, and played them? (The answer to that one might have been tipped off in his latest choice — Anne Murray. But I haven't heard of him considering an Anita Bryant yet, which might amount to throwing away political opportunity when it knocks at everyone's door with its self-appointed warrants for protecting us from ourselves).

Now, even with such burning questions left unasked, I was still level. I assured everyone that, nothing deterred from my purpose and responsibility to the reading public, some sort of show would go on. If I had to write it as the interview that never was I'd go ahead and do it that way. I also said it was hard to be really friendly, ya know, when I hadn't had a chance to confront the man himself. But that was part threat, bluff, and nonsense. I hadn't felt I had to talk to John Milton or D.H. Lawrence to write about them, or anything else that seems to strike recurrent fancies.

The main thing was that I wasn't very satisfied by what I saw and heard and read everyone else getting out of Craig right then. I did finally see an interview that seemed to strike a more approximate note. He was at least a little drunk or high on something from the look and sound of it. It probably revived my faith, though I'm still not sure that tears and a sense of crisis were what I thought I was after, even if it is what Joyce Davidson managed to get. It did confirm two hunches. Getting the quarry wired a bit was some sort of possibility, and in the circumstances, I hardly counted on my personal, animal magnetism any of the times around, or not around, Craig Russell. But still, I think I might have been right that in the end it would take a woman to really probe his attitude towards his craft if not his sense of himself.

I was less pleased when my last hunch, and the rumours I'd based them on, also seemed confirmed. My latest press clipping,

prominently featured in *The Star*, inside what looked like an obituary's frame, informed the world that the "Pressures of Stardom K.O. Craig Russell". For the second time in two weeks, Craig had been pulled from a major awards show. He'd been "unable to walk on" to present an ACTRA award; this time he had collapsed in rehearsals for the Junos. It probably couldn't have happened to a nicer, more talented guy and it made me sad. The same day, buried in an article about Rosedale connections and the Crombie campaign, was the (erroneous) fact that Bill Marshall has made a million dollars on *Outrageous*. Craig Russell says he's broke. Even if the figures are a little inflated it's enough to make any performer collapse. Or drive him to drink.

So I still say that any time Craig Russell wants to have a drink and chat with me I'll be more than glad to accommodate him. I'd also be more than glad to tell the world what he has to say for himself. 'Cause whatever the *Star* tells us, with evident glee and self-justified exoneration oozing between every line, I hope he's not down for anything like a final count on his career. I couldn't afford the Imperial Room myself, of course. But those who could have told

me they've never seen anyone play so hard and so close to so many edges.

In the meantime, it's probably just as well to remind ourselves that nobody gets his (that is, her) man every time. God knows how often I have and then said who needs it anyway. What Craig Russell thinks of new wave performers will remain yet another enigma in these pages. What I really think about Craig Russell remains an enigma even to me. Maybe neither is quite a crucial issue to anyone. But from the first — and unlike everyone else who loved it — I asked myself what he could do after being not so very outrageous on film. It's hard to imagine an acting career based solely on stories about himself. Maybe he can, as he was saying recently, play a taxi driver next, or write the sequel to himself.

Maybe any of us could, and maybe it's happening in real life without a happy ending in sight. However, Pete is still hoping to talk with Craig too, and take some pictures without makeup and costumes.

So, if Craig Russell cares to stand up, please, and if he's able...

We can at the very least promise to make him our queen for the day.



B-GIRLS STORY!

BY: RODNEY BOWES

PHOTO: R. BOWES



THE "B" GIRLS EMERGED INTO THE TORONTO SCENE ON THE 6TH OF OCTOBER 1977 AT DAVID'S, WHERE THEY OPENED FOR THE CADS, AND WHERE JOHNNY AND THE G-RAYS ALSO MADE THEIR DEBUT. THE "B" GIRLS ON THEIR FIRST NIGHT WERE FOUR GIRLS, LUCASTA ROCHAS, CYNTHIA ROSS, RHONDA ROSS AND XENIA HOLLIDAY WHO HAD NEVER BEFORE PLAYED THEIR INSTRUMENTS, WITH

ONLY FOUR MONTHS OF PRACTICE BEHIND THEM. THEY PLAYED SUCH SONGS AS "B SIDE", "DADDY'S CAR", "YOU BETTER RUN", "SEARCH FOR THE HURT" AND DID SUCH COVERS AS "BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE" AND "I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU" BY DUSTY SPRINGFIELD. THEY WERE A SMASH! AT THE END OF THEIR FIRST THREE NIGHTS THERE WERE DEDICATED "B" GIRL FANS.

SINCE THEN THEY MADE A RETURN ENGAGEMENT AT DAVID'S AND PLAYED WITH THE BOYFRIENDS (NOT THEIRS!) THE "B" GIRLS PLAYED SO WELL THAT THEY RECEIVED ENCORES, AND WHEN THEY CAME ON TO PLAY "DADDY'S CAR" THEY HAD THE CROWD ON THEIR FEET AND DANCING. NEVER BEFORE IN TORONTO HAD THERE BEEN SUCH PURE POP, REMINISCENT OF THE SHANGRI-LAS AND DUSTY SPRINGFIELD AT THEIR BEST. THE "B" GIRLS CLAD IN HOT PINK AND TOURQOISE OUTFITS GAVE THE AUDIENCE WHAT THEY WANTED.

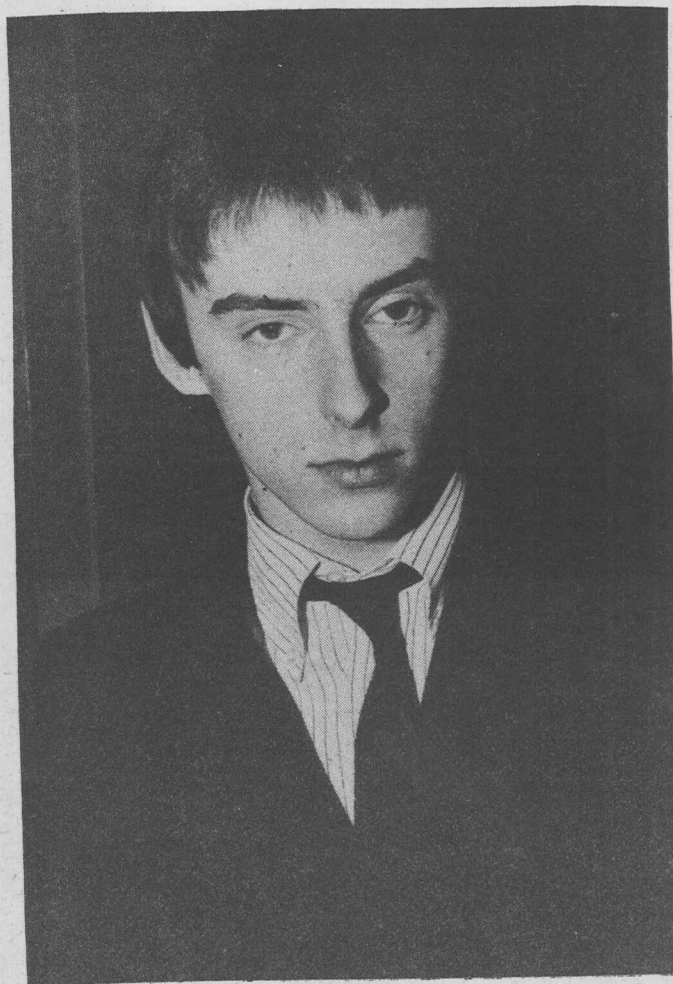
LUCASTA'S FABULOUS VOICE MERGED THE LYRICS AND MELODY LIKE NEVER BEFORE, CYNTHIA'S BOUNCING AND BOP BASS PLAYING, ALONG WITH RHONDA'S DRIVING DRUM BEAT MADE A TIGHT RHYTHMIC COMBO. AND XENIA HOLLIDAY LOOKED MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER. THEIR THIRD AND LAST ENGAGEMENT AS THE ORIGINAL "B" GIRLS OCCURED IN NEW YORK CITY AT CBGB'S ON THE 10TH AND 11TH OF FEBRUARY 1978. THIS SHOW PUT THE ICING ON THE CAKE. THE NEW YORK CITY AUDIENCE WHICH IS USUALLY A HARD AUDIENCE TO WIN OVER, DEMANDED A THIRD SET AT THE END OF A VERY LONG NIGHT. 400 PEOPLE WERE ON THEIR FEET

DANCING TO THE BEAT, AS THE "B" GIRLS PLAYED. THE "B" GIRLS ON THIS NIGHT BECAME AN ESTABLISHED POP QUARTET OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.

ON FEB. 28TH RHONDA ROSS, DUE TO PERSONAL REASONS WHICH MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HER TO CONTINUE THE DEMANDING AND TIME CONSUMING ROLE OF A "B" GIRL, WAS FORCED INTO RETIREMENT AS THE BAND'S DRUMMER, AND TOOK OVER AS MANAGER.

THE JAM

featuring PAUL WELLER



PHOTOS: P.L. NOBLE

By Peter Noble

Shades: When did the band first get together?

Paul: I dunno, I suppose about ... well, I mean as a trio about three years ago or so.

Shades: What was the original concept of the Jam like when things began to look good? You must have been aware that the Jam was turning into a solid commodity within the rock 'n' roll business.

Paul: We didn't aim for any market at all. We just wanted the kids our own age to get into our music. Like I said before, we didn't aim for any market ... we just attained it.

Shades: When you write your material do you try to convey anything in particular with your lyrics?

Paul: Whatever I felt at the time y'know. Don't get the idea that it's political. It's just about people ... sort of social. I dunno, maybe it's just like closely connected but it's not politics; not as far as I'm concerned. I'd call it social, y'know, about everyday problems. [Not political, huh? Ed.]

Shades: But surely you must be aiming for something in particular. [Good for you, Pete. Probe this guy ... Ed.]

Paul: We never really aim for anything. We're just, like, a *band* and we just started playing a certain type of music. If people like it then that's great. If they don't like it then we don't give a shit. The fact that we've got a lot of loyal fans is just one of those things. It's great but if they didn't like it we would still play the same sort of music. As long as the band believes in it then that's enough.

Shades: Do you find the Canadian and American audiences different from the British audiences?

Paul: They are definitely different! I guess they're a bit more subdued. They just don't dance and jump about like they do back home in England. It's more of a challenge I suppose. A lot of American audiences that we've played to may have been receptive, y'know like clapping ... but they sort of sit at the tables and they really sort of stag.

Shades: Your attitude towards your music is different as compared to the average rock 'n' roll bands. In fact, some say you're pro-Monarchy. The British press hyped up the fact that you thought the Queen was doing a good job. Is this true?

Paul: A lot of that was publicity to get us noticed. [!] It wasn't necessarily all hype either. I mean, I still feel patriotic to Britain anyway. I think it's the greatest country! It would be a shame if it really got fucked up.

Shades: The racial problems are getting out of hand, though.

Paul: I don't think the 'Great British Public' should be that angry at the immigrants. If they want to be angry at someone, it should be the government ... 'coz they're the ones that let 'em in. You just can't kick those people out. If you've got to blame someone then it should be the fucking government! The government is responsible for the future of England. Things aren't looking good at this moment in time but I really would like to see it change for the better. [Holy Fuck! These kids' politics are neanderthal! Ed.]

Shades: The British press have compared the Jam to the early Who. They say your biggest influence was Pete Townshend. Do you agree with these accusations?

Paul: It's easy to compare a band to somebody else if you can't find a tag for it. We're something different. Therefore, they can't find anything to explain us by so they say we're a little bit like the Who and a bit like the Small Faces and that sort of crap. Everyone says our band is very 'Who' influenced. I find it totally boring!

Shades: When you return to Britain in May are you going to do a small tour?

Paul: We're going to do some small club dates probably ... just like one-offs. We could play larger halls but we want to show everyone that we don't have to get stuck in that scene. I mean we've done it all. Once you've done it, it gets a bit boring. You begin to miss a lot of the content in it. I don't want to play small clubs for the rest of my life either. I don't want to do anything in particular. I just want to do whatever I feel like doing.

Shades: Will the third record be live?

Paul: No, it'll be a studio album. I think live recordings are a bit of a con. All the tracks have been released anyway. Every live album I've ever listened to is shit. I'm interested in producing good records. I don't want to make them forever and ever ... I just want to make 'em as I see fit.



by Ralph Alfonso

It's cold and it's grey.
I'm talking about Toronto; a city with no place for anything that even remotely hints of jarring it awake.

Like the Runaways, for example. Wild girls in leather, prowling the streets and being hassled by Toronto police at almost every turn for having out-of-town plates, looking mean and under-aged, but most of all trying to have a good time.

Yeah, the Runaways; hard little girls in the sweatbox of Heavy Metal.

In Toronto; line-ups at the El Mocambo two nights running for sex, rock, and few extras. Lots of very un-feminine sweat, thick, oily and sticky.

Makes a good novel, doesn't it?

Nothing at all like the four (Joan Jett, guitar; Lita Ford, lead guitar; Vicki Blue, bass; Sandy West, drums) average sort of girls waiting for their clothes to dry in a Cabbagetown laundromat (all that sweat, y'know?) near their hotel.

Average?

Hiding in dressing rooms. Bodyguards at every gig. Boarded up in hotel rooms.

Average?

"The press has played us up to be tough little girls who would beat up and kill anybody; that we're brats," says new addition Vicki Blue, 18, a sandy-haired blonde glad to be a Runaway but a little homesick for the California sun.

"We're not ... sometimes."

Sometimes?

"Well, we're not angels. We're not murderers, either."

Joan Jett walks into the room. Her hair is black and tangled. She half-smiles a perfunctory hello and sits at the far side of the room with her back turned to us. Nothing to say.

Flashback to the flipside of the first Runaways lp cover; photo inset of Joan Jett alias sad-eyed girl, unsure, almost afraid.

But it's 1978 now.

World wise and world weary.

Seen too much and knows too much.

So here's her counterpoint in Vicki Blue. Everything's still new; still worth exploring.

Anything beats college.

"I got bored and dropped out of school. I wasn't doing anything exciting for a few months, then I heard about Jackie quitting the band. I didn't know they'd had auditions for a bass player when I phoned up."

Vicki was asked by Kim Fowley to rehearse with the band. She joined shortly after.

A word here about Fowley. This is the man who created and assembled the Runaways after placing ads in music papers and scouting the Hollywood teen bars. It took him little time to Svengali them to national prominence.

But that's all over now.

The Runaways have dropped him as manager in favor of the less tempestuous Toby Maxis, the West Coast publicist behind Blondie and the Stranglers.

"It's going to be a legal battle," said Maxis. "It might get pretty messy."

Reluctant to part with his most nurtured creation, Fowley wasted no time in getting even, like trying to cancel hotel reservations and even gigs for the group. In the meantime, Fowley's gone back to the drawing board with a new all-girl group; the Clique.



P. L. NOBLE

m m m m m m m...

An Encounter With

rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrunawayssssssss

The Runaways have also severed ties with Mercury Records.

Vicki is sipping on a glass of milk now. There's a little star tattoo on her left wrist.

"I found out who my real friends were really fast!"

She pauses.

"I only have like three friends and they're really happy for me. Others just ask me to take them to concerts and get them backstage. That's shit!"

The inevitable question is asked.

"I'm not into punk rock. I can't stand three chord punk, it gives me a headache. I like rock and roll."

Anything else?

"I like jazz a lot. I like Flora Purim and Weather Report and stuff like that. I like blues; Bonnie Raitt, Robert Johnson and Fred McDowell."

There are after-images of Jackie Fox and Cherie Currie and the pressures of success. How do you handle fame?

"My mom always said, 'You gotta keep a balance,' and it's true. I mean, like, I don't feel famous really — I feel the same as I've always felt. It doesn't make any difference to me if my picture is in a magazine or not, it really doesn't. It's great, but it's not as big a deal as I thought it would be ... it's a balance you keep between reality and fantasy."

"You're only on stage for a short time. After that, you live in the real world out there."

Real world?

Between bodyguards' shoulders. Through the slits in the dressing room doors. Floors below their hotel windows. Yeah, there's a real world.

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P.L. NOBLE

A Shady Interview With Sylvain Sylvain

By Peter Noble

Shades: Okay Syl, can you tell me about the Criminals?

Syl: Sure! We've got Tony Machine who's our drummer. He used to be in the Rich Kids. I don't know if you guys remember the Rich Kids from New York ... the Vagrants, the Young Rascals, they were all bopping out of N.Y. at the same time. And, ummm ... Mike Page who's an all around musician. He's playing the bass now.

Shades: And who is that character on the keyboards?

Syl: Oh, Bobby Blane ... the man who's responsible for breaking up the Beatles! This guy plays around with everybody in N.Y.! Nah, I'm only kidding, Bobby's an all around man. This guy is ... I mean with a history like his you'd have to write a book about it, y'know?

Shades: When did the Criminals first get together?

Syl: We got together umm ... let me see, January, February ... around March of '77 we actually went out and performed for the first time. Our first gig ever was June 17th, '77. First gig that was ever advertised or anything like that.

Shades: Where did you play and how was the response?

Syl: Max's Kansas City. New York, yeah we played New York all the time. Our first few gigs went great! Y'know the band is like a phenomenon already in N.Y. The Criminals are one of the only rock 'n' roll bands around today.

Shades: Everybody's talking 'bout this new wave, y'know? Well, I don't think the music is really new, but ...

Syl: When they say new up here, I gotta say, "Yeah of course we're new. Less than a year old." So where is the rest of the country? I mean the Dolls were 'new'. The Dolls were ten years ahead, and now the Criminals are about five years ahead. Y'know, compared to what's going on.

Shades: How can you compare the input that you're putting into ...

Syl: Compare to what? I can't compare it to the Dolls. I can't compare nothing to the Dolls! Who want's to? It isn't dead! It's more alive today than ever. As a matter of fact somebody wrote about the Dolls that they should get back together and do one more show at Shea Stadium. I know that it's bigger now than ever, but I can't compare the Criminals to anybody else. There is no other band like the Criminals.

Shades: What is your main goal? I mean, you must be striving for something ...

Syl: We wanna bust out in the American charts. We wanna get into the 'Top Ten' ... A.M.! with our music, with our sound, with our characters and with our band ... this whole act! It's gonna be rough 'coz people aren't ready for it. Just like when they were not ready back then. I'm afraid they might not be ready for this now, y'know? But, uh, y'know, that's fucking rock 'n' roll.

YESTERDAY'S DOLL BOY COMES BACK as TODAY'S CRIMINAL

Shades: How did the Dolls fall apart? Who left first and why?

Syl: The people. The people left us. The people and the kids ... and the industry. Y'know, being so called ... all kinds of things. I dunno ... er ... glam, glitter, geek rock, make-up rock. They called us punk rockers before there was even a 'punk rock'! The first Dolls album, only in the States I'm talking about, sold 125 thousand copies. The 2nd Dolls album sold 150 copies ... almost like a quarter of a million records. All of a sudden we got dropped by Mercury records!

Shades: Why?

Syl: I dunno, but let me put it this way: Back then things were not like they are now. Now, a group like Blondie, their first album sold 18 thousand copies. She happens to be one of the hottest y'know, I mean not ... not 'coz she looks so hot, right? That goes to prove what was going on back then. I mean, back then, five years ago and what's happening today and then what's gonna happen ... maybe later on 'coz it hasn't really hit yet.

Shades: How do you feel about that?

Syl: I'm pissed fucking off! (everyone laughs) I am serious! Would that make you feel any good? Could you imagine if you were in those groups? And then people come up to me and say, "Blah, blah, blah. The Dolls were this, the Dolls were that ..." The Dolls were the fucking greatest and they'll never pick up on it. The day they fucking wake up on it then they might find out where the Criminals are at! That's what's gonna happen.

Y'know everybody thought the Dolls were making it like millionaires. Our first album, we went out there, we came home. We had nothing. Being in the N.Y. Dolls was such a 'thing' with everybody. I think it was the first group everybody thought ... well okay, now we paid our tolls and now the road is open kind a thing, y'know? So I think that's why a lot of people look back at the Dolls with such intensity and say, "They all this and that ...", y'know? That's really a small percentage of people that still realize today that that hasn't even happened. I think the more that time goes on ... and people like Johnny Rotten writing things like "New York." Y'know there must be a real good reason. We must have fucking tickled him fancy. He still didn't get over it!

Shades: What do you think about the Pistol's "New York" tune. Don't you think it's a kick in the face, on the Doll's part?

Syl: Hey listen, I could say one thing man ... he can put anything down ... and there is another song you can hear every fucking guitar lick outa there sounds like Johnny Thunders came in there and put it all down.

Y'know he goes, "She aint no human being." Well, who the fuck did that come out from? Huh? First of all in England they only have one Queen, those poor guys. I mean, in New York we've got millions of Queens. We don't have to write songs about Queens. Soon enough they'll have to shave their chests and their stomachs too. Then they'll know.

Shades: What did Malcom McLaren have to do with the Dolls just before the break-up in '75?

Syl: He came to N.Y. and stuff. He was messing around with our managers at that time 'coz things for us weren't going good. They weren't paying us our salaries. Malcom tried to help us out ... physical problems, y'know?

Shades: Why did he leave?

Syl: We went our separate ways. What else was he going to do? At that particular time I was supposed to start the group with him in England.

Shades: What group?

Syl: This group that he's managing now. He used to write me letters all the time, telling me, "Come on over, come on over." He told me how nothing was gonna work out for me if I didn't go over there and work for him or be a part with his "Sex Pistols" and things. I told him to forget it and just send me my money. I have actual letters ... real letters!!! He used to send them to my Mom. Well, I'm not gonna bullshit, y'know?

Shades: What do you think is going to happen with your new band?

Syl: I'm sure they're going to run right through the Criminals, thinking ...

Shades: Aren't they going to come and see ex-N.Y. Doll guitarist Sylvain Sylvain?

Syl: That's bullshit! I don't care what anybody thinks or writes. This is another fucking band. We're right there too, y'know? People just might go right through it ... well, I don't mean only Toronto. I'm talking about ...

Shades: The world?

Syl: Yeah! The world! The fucking world out there. Today we have below fourteenth street ... tomorrow we'll have uptown!

REQUEIM FOR SOME HEAVYWEIGHTS: PUNK GOES (NOT SO) SHOCKING PINK

by Sheila Wawonash

Some time ago, I decided that I agreed with Robert Christgau about what people were calling punk rock. As long ago as last October, he was telling *Village Voice* readers that "by experimenting with certain implicit imperatives of rock and roll, punk cleans out the ears". In a later version of his evangelist message he proclaimed that it was, at the least, the currency that had to be dealt with.

Of course, there was more to it than that. And less, right from the start. For what happened to Robert Christgau and I was rather like accidentally dropping in on a revival meeting we hadn't committed ourselves to attending, much less approving. For me, it was almost literally as if someone had switched the address in my appointment book. About last September. That's when I first met Bob and heard the records he'd brought along to an academic, vaguely oppositional conference for "paraliterary studies" in Montreal. Things haven't been quite the same for me since (if they ever were).

You see, I'd given up on rock and roll almost entirely at that point. I figured that if I couldn't really distinguish Aerosmith from The Eagles I might as well stick to jazz and Jamaican anyway. Maybe, at thirty, my rock and roll heart had, after all, stopped beating. Even hearing punk predecessors like John Cale and Lou Reed and Iggy Pop with David Bowie hadn't quite convinced me that the moment had come to resume the search for what would make me shake all over, round the clock.

Soon after that Montreal meeting, however, I acquired a few new records myself. Even my old Patti Smith bootlegs were nudged aside by *The Clash*, *Television*, the newest *Ramones*, *The Sex Pistoals*. And everyone who came through the door was submitted to my latest obsession. I listened to my long-suffering friends begin to sound like another generation before my very ears. It wasn't long before I was making forays into the not so far flung reaches of the local punk scene, making new friends who shared my enthusiastic interest in what we usually chose to call the new wave.

But of course, most of that is ancient history, given the longevity of cultural swells and ripples these days. Especially when a phenomenon does get a lot of the media's most sensational coverage, and doesn't get airplay. I'm also willing to admit that the current crisis of punk has a lot to do, too, with the self-destruct devices around which much of its theatrics have revolved. It wasn't so much that individual performers presented themselves as literal manifestations of rock's metaphorical suicide drives. There was about the entire movement the feeling that these were shock troops, or therapy. They stormed the barricades of big music biz success, equally astringent against the emollient formulae of sensitive/bland, intense, no-protest singers songwriting, or heavy metal group excess. But even at its peak there was an undercurrent of more or less planned obsolescence to punk. It should only have been a question of time before bands began to produce something besides their own locally-made singles, or to play something more than the strictest kind of hard-driving, minimal music. If, that is, they really had something to say or anyone who might listen.

Now before I go any farther, I'd like you to understand that Toronto is a unique place to drift into the new wave's currents. It's tax and recording situation is, at the moment, unique and desirable. A lot of bands pass through here from almost everywhere else. And some of them are beginning to think of playing TO as something rather special. Joey Ramone, for example, recently told me that this town "really works" for his band — which is the one that, according to most reports, was all but single handedly responsible for the entire new wave in England.

For the most part, that makes for the better health of the local body cultural, so to speak. I hope that much should be obvious by now, though it does pose interesting questions in light of what is here, there and virtually everywhere a regional set of phenomena too. Is there, can there, should there be "a Toronto sound" (like a Canadian identity maybe, if you remember that one)? And if there is or could be, how far will it go outside its own environs? As considerations, take the routes of Dan Hill and Gordon Lightfoot, current and perennial darlings of the American record and promotion industries as much as the Juno awards. Or that of Rough Trade, currently disbanded after finally becoming last year's local rave.

As usual, I was starting to ask myself questions like these when answers seemed

to present themselves around me. First, I had a chat with Greg Shaw of *Bomp* magazine and enterprizes in California. He was the first outsider who, without any prompting, put the case of Toronto to me in the way I had begun to think about it myself. "It's not really much like Liverpool was," he said. "But, you know, it reminds me a lot of San Francisco back in the mid-sixties, when there were a lot of bands around, all with different sounds of their own, and ideas. And I think the whole thing will break from here, big, inside six months." Greg is prepared to act on this intuition, too. He'll soon be back in our town to record several of the local groups that have attracted his interest — and not much of anyone else's in the industry.

Then I discovered that two of the bands with a strong local following are presently engaged in projects that will take them (and news of where they're coming from) pretty far afield in the immediate future. The Poles have already finished recording an EP in New York with prestigious John Cale producing. It will be released in June. After that will come a tour, an album, maybe another tour all the way to Europe. This summer, the Viletones are releasing a new

single that should, like their first, hit the charts strongly in England. This time they'll be there to follow up with live performances right in the heart of punk's green and sometimes pleasant land.

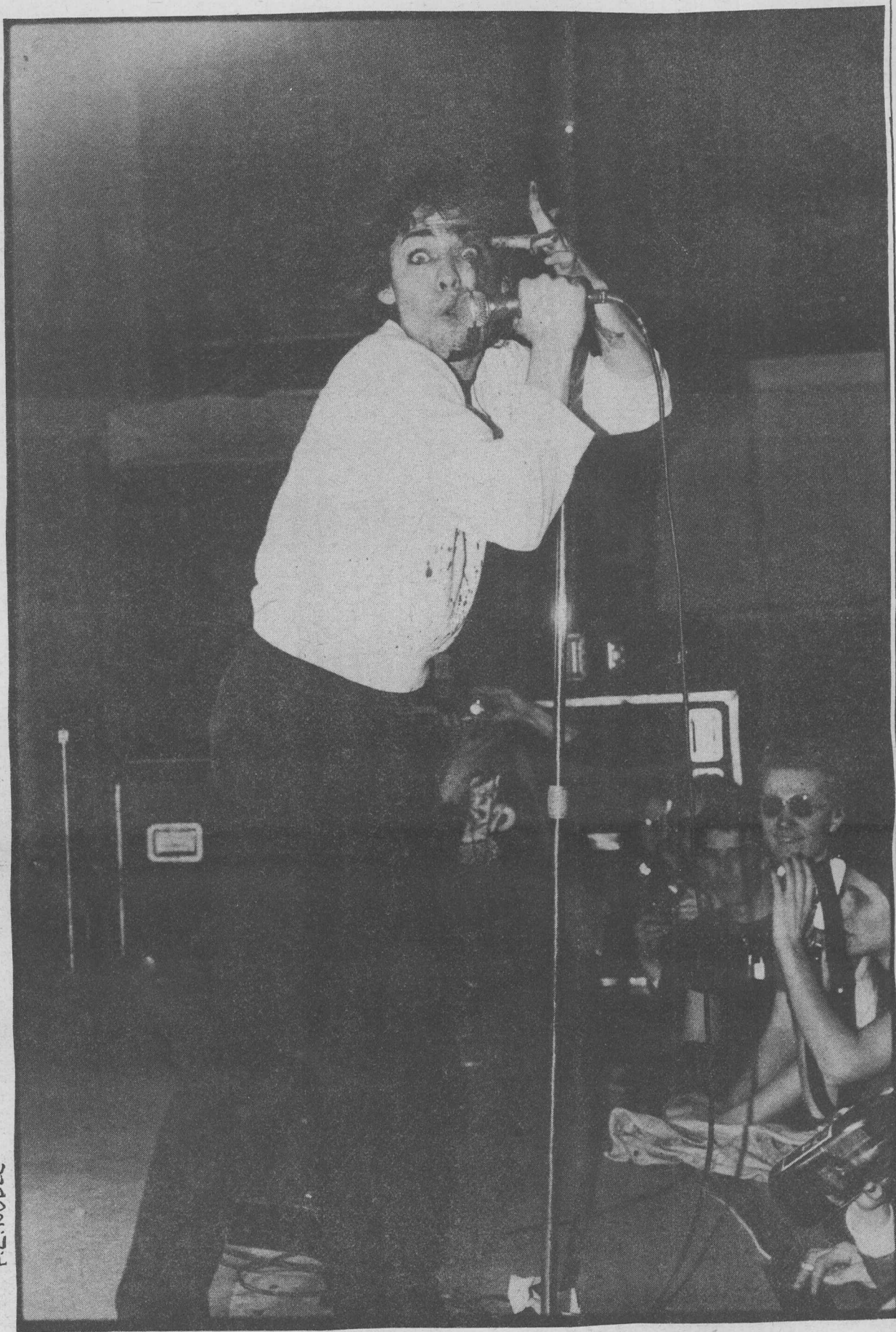
So I started to ask myself what would be left for a summer of dancing in the streets with these two out of town. Of course, there would be enough local dinosaurs left to fill a few bills: The Curse, Teenage Head, The Ugly. They've all been around for nearly the full year I consider the bottom line of staying power. It's about the time required to start getting gigs, as well as attention. But what else was there going to be? And what was it going to look and sound like? And was I likely to go on caring?

Two concerts put a lot of it together and in perspective. Between them, they showcased ten bands. But between them in another sense there seemed to open a widening gap.

On April 7, the punks celebrated their spring rituals at the Masonic Temple. I anticipated a high volume of musical and crowd energy. Well, it was loud enough,

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R. BOWES

and there was a rather nasty incident in which the lead singer of The Wads took a beer bottle to the head just as he announced their favorite song. Bloody but unbowed, he went on to finish the set. It was about the only commendable thing he or his band managed to do. Overall, the tone of the whole affair was epitomized when someone simply fell out of a window behind where I was sitting in the balcony. No one knew what happened, really. Probably he was just nerveless with drink. Or boredom.

Because the night struck me as the kind after which one is tempted, at least, to write an obituary. The first three groups were eminently forgettable, regardless of whatever else happened. I even have trouble recalling who they were or what they did. In fact, it was The Dents, The Wads and Brat. To put it bluntly, they seemed like decadent versions of the final half of the program.

The Ugly livened up a crowd I wouldn't have blamed for leaving. And they played well, they are much more interesting visually than they used to be, and they performed some physical manouvres a gymnast-dancer might have admired.

They're at last beginning to have a more flexible sound than some of the local heavyweights. But then they played too long. What they started to limber up they also rendered turgid again.

They were followed by one of my favorite bands, that inimitable female ensemble, The Curse. Nothing about their performance changed my mind about the fun and value of their frontal assault on assorted culture-induced assumptions surrounding such phenomena as femininity and good taste. Quite a bit of their show was inadvertently stolen, however, by the mere presence of a visiting star. Debra Harry, of New York's Blondie, probably wanted to see and hear The Curse, as it was during their set that she emerged from having her picture taken backstage. But an amazing vortex of those lured by a famous face only wanted to see and be near her.

The Viletones closed, masterfully, for those still able to sit through their set. They remain one of the purest examples anywhere of the punk form as George puts it. It felt like the first in a series of goodbyes, though. They're gearing up and never sounded better. But it wasn't somehow, entirely for us like it used to be.

I left feeling largely enervated. Either my rock and roll heart was slowing up again, or punk itself was becoming what it had seemed that night. A little tired of its own postures, unable to attract a large audience, or even a small one that was really, vitally interested. What was more, looking around me, I was unable to convince myself that I was surrounded by the brightest and best of a new generation prepared to inherit the spirit if not the letter of counter-cultural laws legislated by and for those formed by coming of age during antecedent, essentially avant-garde, behomeian phases. For one passing moment, I was desperate enough to think I might have been having more fun if I'd gone to a disco.

Maybe it springs eternal, or maybe it's just that time of year. A week later, I was hopeful again about hearing four more bands at a newly converted theatre on Bloor Street West (the Metro). Perhaps this would be the seasonal revival that somehow misfired the week before, and maybe it would mark the time of a new phase beginning.

If anything, I left this concert feeling even worse. It was different all right. But it wasn't any better.

The show started with The B Girls. They wore bright pants and played innocuous pop-based music with a competent lack of inspiration. Everyone says they're the most improved band in town, and nearly everyone thinks it's great that girls are getting work these days. I agree. I also wish I could say I liked this group. Because I didn't exactly dislike them. I only found them uninteresting except insofar as they lend themselves to seeming just what they are ... cute. Maybe they're still a little stage shy. But they didn't seem to me to have any ideas to develop from, especially not about the difficult dilemmas facing female performers these days. I predict they'll get plenty of work, and that everyone will continue to like them more and more. With that comfortable, indulgent condescension with which female pop performers these days are usually regarded.

But worse was yet to come. I can skip rather lightly over The Cads and Teenage Head. Both sustained interest for a couple of the numbers that all sounded pretty much alike. Then I started to get bored with both the music and the fixity of repeated on-the-spot group dynamics. The Cads looked like they might become a real threat in the most widely English-influenced sweepstakes. Teenage Head was, as usual, solidly entertaining but still not really coming up on first ranks anymore.

What I'd like to mention, however, is the embarrassment I felt at sitting through half of The Androids closing set. The problem revolves around female performance again. Sally Cato sings lead for The Androids, and she is a luscious example of contemporary womanhood. She also has a decent voice and, if she got off her spiked heels, could probably move well enough. As it was, she was used as a showpiece for the most reactionary kind of girlie display. This audience was even smaller than the Masonic show's had been, and more passive, if only because the comfort of theatre seats tended to keep them there. Most of them cleared out before The Androids were finished, however. It says a lot for them that they were neither fooled nor interested.

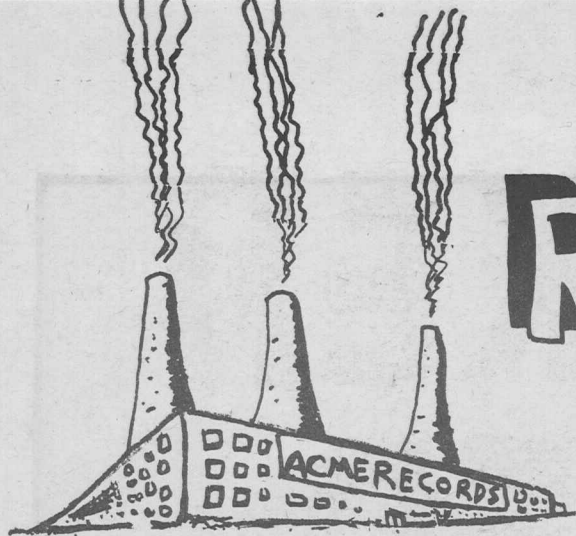
In spite of the evidence, I'm not really despondent about the future of local new wave music. There's a lot of decadence around, to be sure. But one thing that implies is that there's space opening up for something really new again. The term I keep hearing is Power Pop. It sounds like it might well be another industry concoction, but I'm still anxious to hear the first local manifestation that bills itself that way. Bob Segarini, a recent emigre on the local front, keeps telling me about the album his new band will be releasing this summer.

And what about Punkadelic? I've heard another new band rehearsing. They call themselves The Existers, and most of them have come together from various punk groups that used to be. But their ages and backgrounds are extremely diverse. They all write, often collectively. Their music is already dynamic and flexible, full of driving ideas and real excitement. I think "Spadina" and "Bobbsey Twin Love" will be haunting us all sometime soon, if it isn't "Not Naive" or an "Anxiety Attack". If you start hearing songs with titles like that, listen. The group says it's a post-punk slice of life, and promises to be alive on arrival. They're practically overdue already but, more important, I think you'll like them at least as much as anything you've heard, or not heard, on the local scene so far.

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RECORD VIEWS



By Cad Wouldworker

Muzak music made to deter shoplifters

NEW YORK (AP) — Somewhere in a large Eastern city, a scientist claims, shoppers are getting a message with their Muzak these days — but they don't know it. He says it's a subliminal voice aimed at reducing shoplifting by telling them: "I will not steal."

The theft deterrent is being field-tested in a store "in a large Eastern Seaboard city," Hal Becker of Metairie, La., told a conference in Atlanta on Wednesday. He refused to identify the city.

"What the new application does in behavior therapy is to provide stimuli on a background music system to set an example in honesty reinforcement and theft deterrent," Mr. Becker said in an interview.

"Our intention, based on the tests, is to make it available to retail outlets — department stores, supermarkets," he said.

Mr. Becker said the system has the subliminal message "embedded" in background music so the conscious mind can't quite hear it.

"The message is designed to work almost like a post-hypnotic suggestion to be honest and to avoid stealing," Mr. Becker said. "There are words in the message like 'I am honest' and 'I will not steal.'"

Mr. Becker, who has taught at Tulane University's department of biomedical engineering, was in Atlanta to deliver a paper to a meeting of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers.

Adelaide Hahn, Tulane information officer, described Mr. Becker as "a super guy with about 50 different degrees," who has "done a lot of work in subliminal learning."

Mr. Becker said a New Orleans supermarket chain has estimated that one of 14 people "is seriously and significantly shoplifting."

"In a store of about 2,000 employees, the annual rate of shoplifting was greater than \$1.6-million," he said.

Mr. Becker said that if the subliminal messages came into widespread use, employees and customers would be "informed that a system is being used to deter shoplifting and lower prices to customers through store savings."

Trend to Watch: New Wave Behind the Iron Curtain, Rock Political Prisoners. Rod Stewart gaining force as Right Wing Spokesman.

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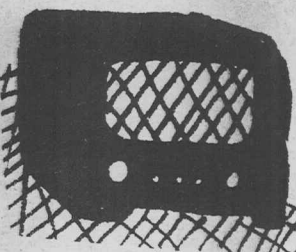
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HELEN REDDY: "COCAINE IN TAHITI"

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CONSUMER GUIDE

VOICE APRIL 24, 1978

By Robert Christgau

BARRY MANILLOW: "THE ABORTION"

BARRY'S NEW SINGLE IS UNBELIEVABLE! WITH KIM FOWLEY PRODUCING, BARRY HAS BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH SOME OF THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY POP LYRICS AROUND TODAY. "SLIP IT IN THE JOHN, OH GIRL YOU TURN ME ON..." DESTINED TO STRIKE TRIPLE PLATINUM! AVAILABLE ON DISCHARGE RECORDS & TAPES.



THE BEE GEES: "LIVE IN MONGOLIA"

A RATHER INNOVATIVE AND SHOCKING PLATTER FROM THE TALENTED GIBB BROS. SEEMS THAT EVEN THOUGH BARRY HAS TEN SINGLES ON THE CHARTS, HE'S STILL DETERMINED TO ADAPT TO A NEW FORM OF MUSIC.

THIS TIME THE CAPPED-TEETHED CREATURES SING TO THE SOUNDS OF MONGOLIAN PUNKS STRUNG OUT ON HUMAN SACRIFICE. PRETTY WILD, BUT IT REALLY ROCKS. NICE WORK BARRY! AVAILABLE ON PEE-PEE RECORDS & TAPES.



interesting o' culture review called X has appeared, and should appear

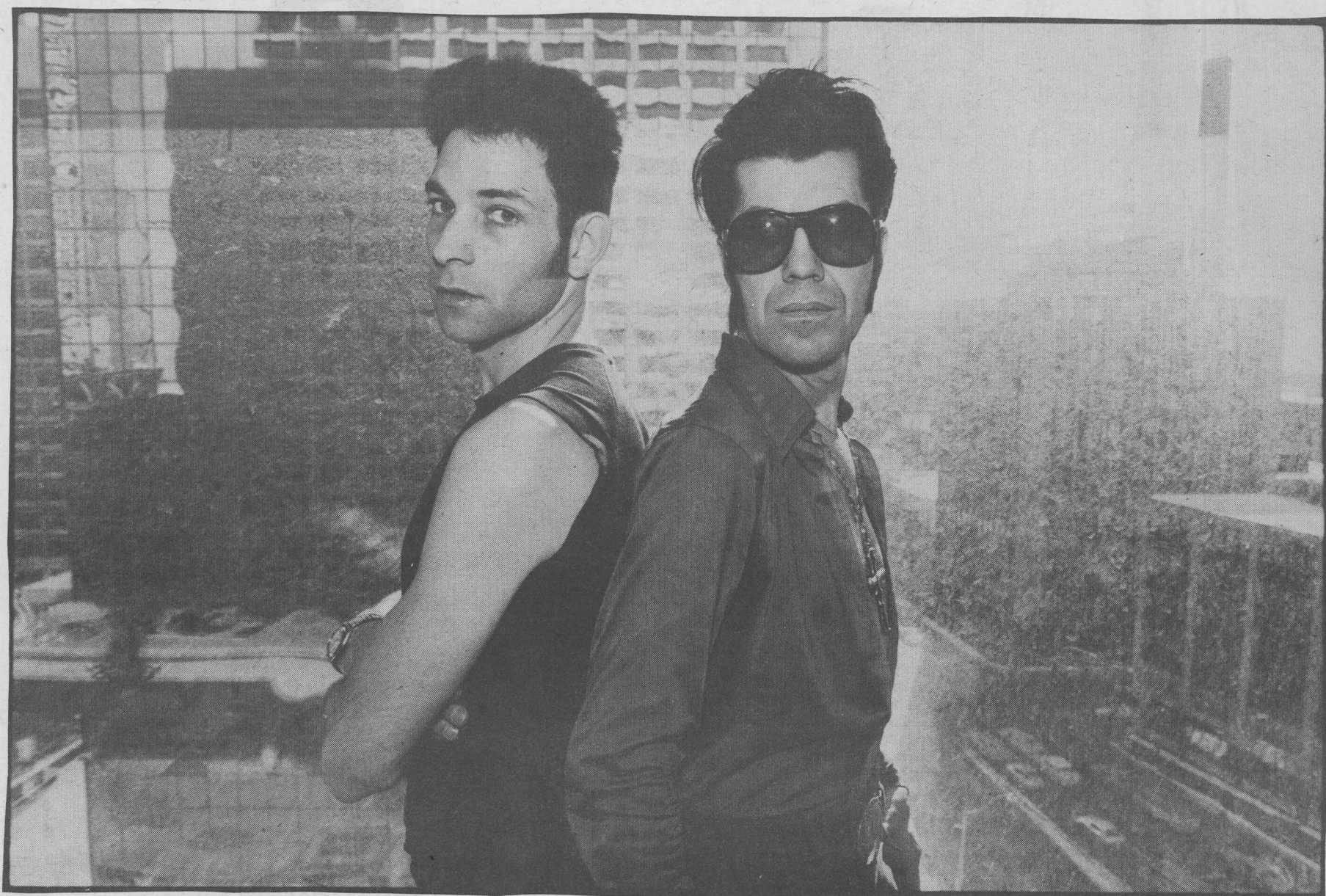
PEOPLE WHO HAND OUT PRESS PRIVILEGES RARELY BOTHER PUNK. BUT SOMETIMES THEY HAVE QUOTAS TO FILL SO THEY SCRAPE THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL, SWALLOW THEIR PRIDE, CALL US UP AND INVITE US TO FREE BOOZE, FOOD, RECORDS, SHOWS ANYTHING TO GET THEIR "ARTIST'S" NAME IN PRINT.

IN FACT, YOU CAN MEASURE AN ARTIST'S FUTURE SUCCESS BY HOW BADLY THE COMPANY WANTS TO WASTE MONEY ON HIM/HER/IT, AS THEY ALSO WASTE IT ON ADS, PROMOTION + PAYOLA.

THIS IS WHY SO MUCH OF THE MUSIC TODAY SUCKS.

everybody had a good time. I saw a new band called the COMMUNISTS

Punk rock passe? Only a music-biz trend-monger or some similar kind of fool could believe such a canard, and it is in awe of such foolishness that I have tried to make everything crystal clear below, interpreting the term narrowly to indicate high-speed basic-chord rock with the sort of unflagging and unsentimental propulsion punk junkies like me have learned to crave. Perhaps promo men and other discriminating reactionaries will now be able to tell the misguided fadhoppers from the genuine ringleaders and abandon their lingering suspicion that anyone new and English might be Johnny Rotten in disguise. For the rest of you, there are the grades; A minus or better is a shorthand way for me to let you know that the record might be worth a rock and roll fan's time and money. There are more good new records out right now than at any time since I returned to The Voice four years ago. And punk rock, of course, has nothing to do with it.



P.L. NOBLE

ROBERT GORDON & LINK WRAY

WHAT'S RIGHT IN THIS PICTURE? IS THIS THE WINNING PAY-OFF COMBINATION? OR ANOTHER NOVELTY FLASHBACK IN THE GOLD PAN? WRITE YOUR LOCAL RECORD COMP. REPRESENTATIVE IF YOU'VE GOT THE ANSWER, OR ANY COMPLAINTS.

CONSIDER THE CASE. (NEVER THE QUITE MISSING) LINK'S BEEN AROUND SINCE THE REAL THING 50's RUMBLES playing THE GUITAR LICKS HE INVENTED BACK THEN. THEY STILL SOUND GREAT - IN FACT, NEVER BETTER.

NOW ROBERT GORDON CLAIMS HE SLEPT THROUGH THE SIXTIES. NOTHING EXCITED HIM: BUT WE KNOW HE WAS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD, THEN IN THE SMALL-CHANGE LEATHER CRAFTING BUSINESS, MARRIED, AND SO ON. NOW THAT'S ALL REPRESSED. HE'S LIVING THE ROCK N' ROLL LIFE, SINGING ITS SONGS AND THEY SOUND GREAT AGAIN - IN FACT, NEVER BETTER.

SO WHAT ELSE TO IT? ONE LITERAL ~~REVIVAL~~^{SUR} ~~REVIVAL~~, ONE (PURPORTED) BYPASS. EVERYBODY'S DROPPING BACK IN THESE DAYS. AVANT-GUARD NOSTALGIA MAY BE ONE WAY OF DEALING WITH HISTORY FOR THE MOMENT (AS LONG AS ITS NOT TOO IMMEDIATE). DOES IT SET-UP A FUTURE? ... CONSIDER AGAIN. IAN DURY, NEXT TIME. TRADITIONS AND INDIVIDUAL TALENTS! SO, UH, SO WHAT? SO CONSIDER...

NAME



P.L. NOBLE

1

THE

NEW YORK

ROCK

STARS



P.L. NOBLE

our 2

shot

CECIE STEINER



3

lotsa luck to THE POLES!

COMING IN

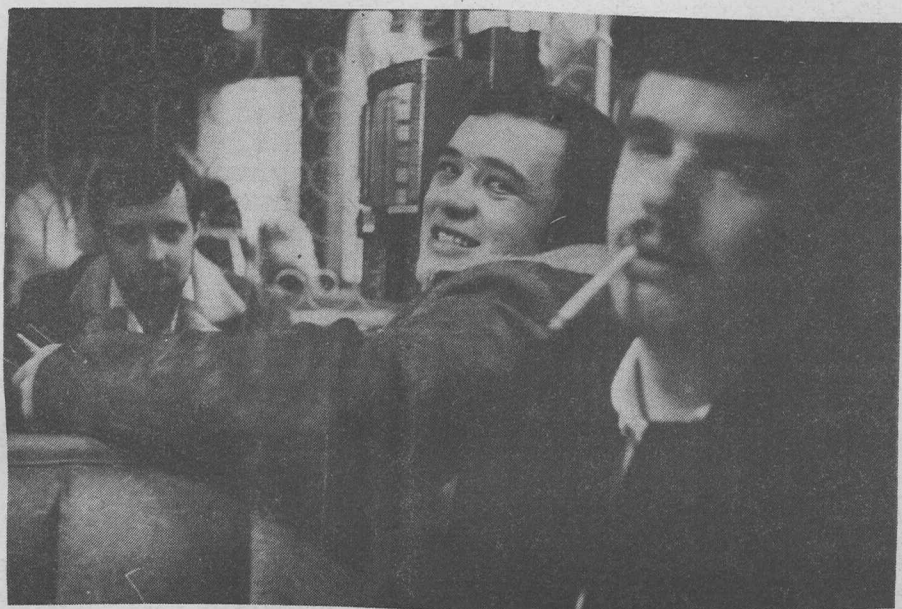
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OUR

BIG

NOSTALGIA

ISSUE



FEATURING:

ORAL GRATIFICATION!

MISSING LINKS! EVERYPUNK!

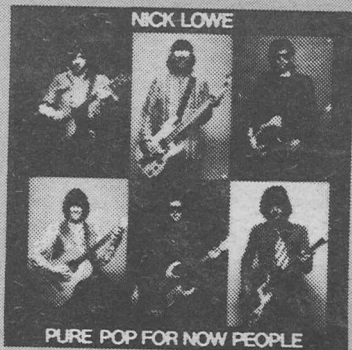
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EVERYBODY TALKS ABOUT NICK LOWE, BUT NOBODY EVER DID ANYTHING ABOUT HIM. UNTIL NOW.



You've got to be a bit of a music fanatic to know exactly who Nick Lowe is... or perhaps we should say, who he's been up until now.

Nick Lowe has been associated, in one way or another, with some of the best acts to come out of England in the seventies: Brinsley Schwarz, Dave Edmunds, Graham Parker, Elvis Costello, Dr. Feelgood. And his own solo singles have recently emerged as hot items at the import shops.

THE NEW WAVE IS OLD TO NICK LOWE.

Nick Lowe was responsible for producing a host of new wave acts when the new wave was truly new. Now, he's almost sorry. "I'm bored with the safety-pin brigade. I look around and I see all these bands... and they've got no style. It's just a fashion. I mean, if I see another group with dyed hair that thinks they're tough with razor blades around their necks, I'll go mad. They're wimps. It used to be good fun when it was a threat. But now it's wimpy. It's what the Easybeats were to the Beatles."

EASILY BORED. As a producer for England's pioneering Stiff Records, Nick Lowe also became involved with people who he feels have that elusive quality, "style."

"I feel fortunate in having worked with people who really know what they're about, people I admire, like Elvis

Costello. People who just get on with it. I'm impatient when I'm producing. Easily bored. I want something to be happening all the time in the studio."

At last. A record producer who's as easily bored as, perhaps, you are, with over indulgent rockers who spend their time (and yours) trying to create "art." Nick puts it this way:

"I'm not interested in art. I'm interested in style, and people with style and ideas. People with zip. People with sass and imagination. Elvis knows where he's going. And he'll get there with style. It's the same with Graham Parker. Graham's got the same determination, the same style."

"BANG IT DOWN AND TART IT UP." That's how Nick Lowe describes his current philosophy on recording. He likes to work quickly, capture the energy while it's still fresh. You can hear it on the albums he produced. And you can hear it on his own album. There are lots of "take one's" on a Nick Lowe album. Because if things aren't falling together, Nick will move on to something else, for the time being at least. That's why his albums with

Elvis and Graham have a power that seems to elude most recordings. Nick Lowe won't waste your time.

O.K. so Nick Lowe is a terrific producer. But where does he come off making records under his own name?

He comes off with a more impressive background as an artist than most artists have at debut album time.

"I DON'T NEED NICK LOWE?" British rocker Dave Edmunds has been quoted as saying, "I don't need Nick Lowe. I'm sure I could walk onto a stage without him. I just want him to be there. It wouldn't be as much fun without him. It wouldn't be as exciting. I love it when Nick starts groov-

the time. Loud, non-melodic, long-winded rock was in. Nick Lowe was writing pretty, melodic, short, light-textured songs. Brinsley Schwarz released quite a few albums, and had hard-core fans who loved them. And then they split up. Two members wound up as members of Graham Parker's Rumour. There's no telling where Nick Lowe is going to wind up.

AN ABSOLUTE KILLER. Nick Lowe started 70 songs before he wound up with what has now emerged as his first solo album. It's been a long time coming. In an interview Nick gave in October, he promised his

English followers, "I won't release the album until I am satisfied that it's an absolute killer. And I don't care how long that takes." Unlike other artists who spend their studio time laboring over each track, creating "art," Nick spent the time bashing out songs, one after another, until he had a dozen with the quality and the energy that he was striving for. "I think of everything in terms of two-and-a-half minute, three-minute pictures. Every spare bit, every bit you don't need, dump it."

TODAY'S MUSIC TODAY. It's obvious that Nick Lowe has his own very strong ideas about what rock & roll records should be like.

And it's obvious from listening to his Columbia album, "Pure Pop for Now People," that Nick Lowe is right.

ing. 'Cos, I start grooving. Everyone starts grooving."

Nick Lowe has played guitar. He's played bass. He's toured with various groups. He was part of the Stiff tour. And he was a key member of a key band in the development of British rock: Brinsley Schwarz.

Brinsley Schwarz was a group that flew in the face of everything else that was happening at

"PURE POP FOR NOW PEOPLE?"
THE NICK LOWE ALBUM, on
Columbia Records and Tapes

